ATTACHMENT J-1

NOTICE OF PREPARATION, NOTICE OF INTENT, AND SUPPLEMENTAL NOTICE OF PREPARATION, AND DRAFT EIR/EIS NOTICES

This attachment contains the following:

- Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an Environmental Impact Statement and Environmental Impact Report for the Mid County Parkway Project (November 2004) (16 pages)
- Notice of Intent (November 16, 2004) (7 pages)
- Supplemental NOP of An Environmental Impact Report and Environmental Impact Statement for the Mid County Parkway Project (SCH #2004111103) (16 pages)
- 2008 Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement and Notice of a Public Hearing (1 page)
- Notice of Availability of the Mid County Parkway Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (Federal Registers Volume 73, No. 199, Tuesday October 14, 2008, pages 60748 and 60749) (2 pages)
- United States Army Corps of Engineers Public Notice Application for Permit (October 31, 2008 through December 8, 2008) (25 pages)
- 2014 Notice of Availability of Recirculated Sections of Chapter 4.0 (III, Air Quality; VII, Greenhouse Gases; 4.5, Climate Change; and Table 4.10) of the Recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Report (2 pages)

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NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY PROJECT

INTRODUCTION

This document is the Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Mid County Parkway project from Interstate 15 (I-15) on the west to State Route 79 (SR-79) on the east within western Riverside County, California. Under the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) is the Lead Agency for environmental review of the proposed project and must evaluate the potentially significant environmental effects. The RCTC has determined that an EIR must be prepared to assess the proposed project's effects on the environment, to identify potentially significant impacts, to identify feasible mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate potentially significant environmental impacts, and to discuss potentially feasible alternatives to the project that may accomplish basic project objectives while lessening or eliminating any potential significant project impacts.

Since the proposed project is to be partially funded with federal transportation funds, environmental compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is also required. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be prepared for NEPA compliance. To ensure coordination between the NEPA and CEQA processes and to avoid duplication of effort, a joint NEPA/CEQA document will be prepared. The joint document will be an EIS/EIR (an EIS for NEPA and an EIR for CEQA). The purpose of the NOP is to describe the proposed project, describe the location of the project, describe the probable environmental effects of the project that will be evaluated in the EIS/EIR, and solicit input regarding the scope and content of the analysis to be included in the EIS/EIR.

BACKGROUND

The Mid County Parkway project was identified as a key east-west regional transportation corridor as a result of several years of comprehensive land use and transportation planning in Riverside County through the Riverside County Integrated Project (RCIP). The RCIP is an unprecedented, multi-year planning effort to simultaneously prepare environmental, transportation, housing, and development guidelines for Riverside County for the first half of the twenty-first century. The purpose of the RCIP is to address the planning, environmental, and transportation issues that would result from the anticipated doubling of population in Riverside County, from 1.5 million residents currently to approximately 3.0 million by 2020. The RCIP includes three components: (1) a new General Plan for Riverside County, adopted on October 7, 2003; (2) a Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) for western Riverside County (approved by the County in June 2003 and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in June 2004); and (3) the Community and Environmental Transportation Acceptability Process (CETAP). In addition, the RCIP Partnership Action Plan (September 2000) commits participating federal, State, and county governments to incorporate the western Riverside County Special Area Management Plan (SAMP) into all three RCIP planning efforts. The purpose of

the SAMP is to provide for comprehensive aquatic resource protection and reasonable economic growth.

CETAP study efforts were jointly undertaken by the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) and the County of Riverside. CETAP includes the study of two inter-county corridors (Riverside County to Orange County and Riverside County to San Bernardino County) and two intra-county transportation corridors. The "internal" (intra-county) corridors included a north-south and an east-west study area. Tier 1 analyses and environmental documents were initiated for the two corridors in the fall of 2000. The purpose of the Tier 1 efforts was to select a preferred alternative and preserve needed right-of-way. A Draft Tier 1 EIS/EIR was prepared for the east-west (Hemet to Corona/Lake Elsinore, or HCLE) Corridor and circulated for public review in July 2002. The Draft EIS/EIR considered 14 "build" alternatives that extended from San Jacinto/Hemet on the east to Corona/Lake Elsinore on the west. Several alternatives were variations of routes along Ramona Expressway and Cajalco/El Sobrante Road, at the northwestern portion of the HCLE study area. Transportation analyses were conducted for these and other alternatives to the south, along portions of SR-74, Domenigoni Parkway, Ethanac Road, and Newport Road.

The analyses indicated the alternative with the greatest transportation benefit was located along Ramona Expressway, Cajalco Road, and El Sobrante Road, with a connection to I-15. This alternative demonstrated it best met traffic needs by providing the greatest benefits in terms of increases in speed, reductions in travel time, and congestion relief. In addition, public comments identified concerns regarding adverse impacts to existing communities for the portion of the alternatives located north of Lake Mathews. As a result of the information contained in the Draft Tier 1 EIS/EIR regarding transportation benefits and the community input received on the HCLE alternatives, the RCTC Board accepted a staff recommendation in June 2003 to proceed with the accelerated preparation of a project-level environmental document for an east-west alternative that included the Ramona Expressway/Cajalco Road alignment located south of Lake Mathews. This action by the RCTC terminated the Tier 1 study efforts and began a focused, project-level study effort for the Mid County Parkway project.

The Circulation Element of the Riverside County General Plan currently identifies Ramona Expressway and Cajalco Road as future expressways of four to eight lanes, and realigns the portion of Cajalco Road south of Lake Mathews. The proposed Cajalco Ramona Corridor executes the intent of the prior RCTC and County actions with regard to the HCLE Corridor and is consistent with the intent of the County's Circulation Element, which recognizes that the decisions regarding the CETAP corridors will result in appropriate amendments to the General Plan.

The Mid County Parkway project is consistent with SCAG's adopted 2004 Draft Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), which emphasizes the identification of long-range corridors. The internal east-west corridor is identified on the RTP map of User Fee-Backed Capacity Improvements.

PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of the proposed project is to provide a transportation facility that will effectively and efficiently accommodate regional east-west movement of people and goods between and through

San Jacinto, Perris, and Corona within western Riverside County. More specifically, the project objectives are to provide a transportation facility that will:

- Provide increased capacity to support the forecast travel demand for the 2030 design year
- Provide limited access
- Provide roadway geometrics to meet State highway design standards
- Accommodate Surface Transportation Assistance Act (STAA) National Network for oversized trucks
- Provide a facility that is compatible with a future multimodal transportation system

SUMMARY PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project is located in western Riverside County. Figure 1 depicts the proposed study area for the Mid County Parkway project, the surrounding vicinity, and the regional location of the project. The study area is approximately 32 miles long and ranges from 1 to 4 miles in width. The alternatives to be addressed in the EIS/EIR are described below.

The Mid County Parkway project includes a no project alternative, six build alternatives, and a General Plan circulation element alternative. Of the seven build alternatives, four are parkway alternatives and three are combination General Plan/parkway alternatives. Many of the alignment alternatives share common segments. Maps of the alignment alternatives are provided in Attachment A.

Alternative 1: No Project/No Action

Alternative 1 represents 2030 traffic on the planned street network except for future improvements to Cajalco Road and Ramona Expressway, which would remain as they exist today. The future east-west traffic described in the study area would be served by the existing Cajalco Road and El Sobrante between I-15 and I-215, and by existing Ramona Expressway between I-215 and SR-79. This alternative assumes 2030 land use conditions and implementation of planned improvements to the regional and local circulation system as accounted for in the Riverside County General Plan and other adopted plans and policies.

Alternative 2: North of Lake Mathews/North Perris

Alignment Alternative 2 is a 6- to 10-lane limited access parkway alternative. Alternative 2 is located north of Lake Mathews and follows a northerly alignment through Perris. The alignment would be located along or near the existing El Sobrante Road for much of the area directly north of Lake Matthews and follows a new alignment west of Lake Mathews. It is located north of Ramona Expressway from I-215 to east of Evans Road. Alternative 2 would connect to system-to-system interchanges at I-15, at I-215, and at SR-79.

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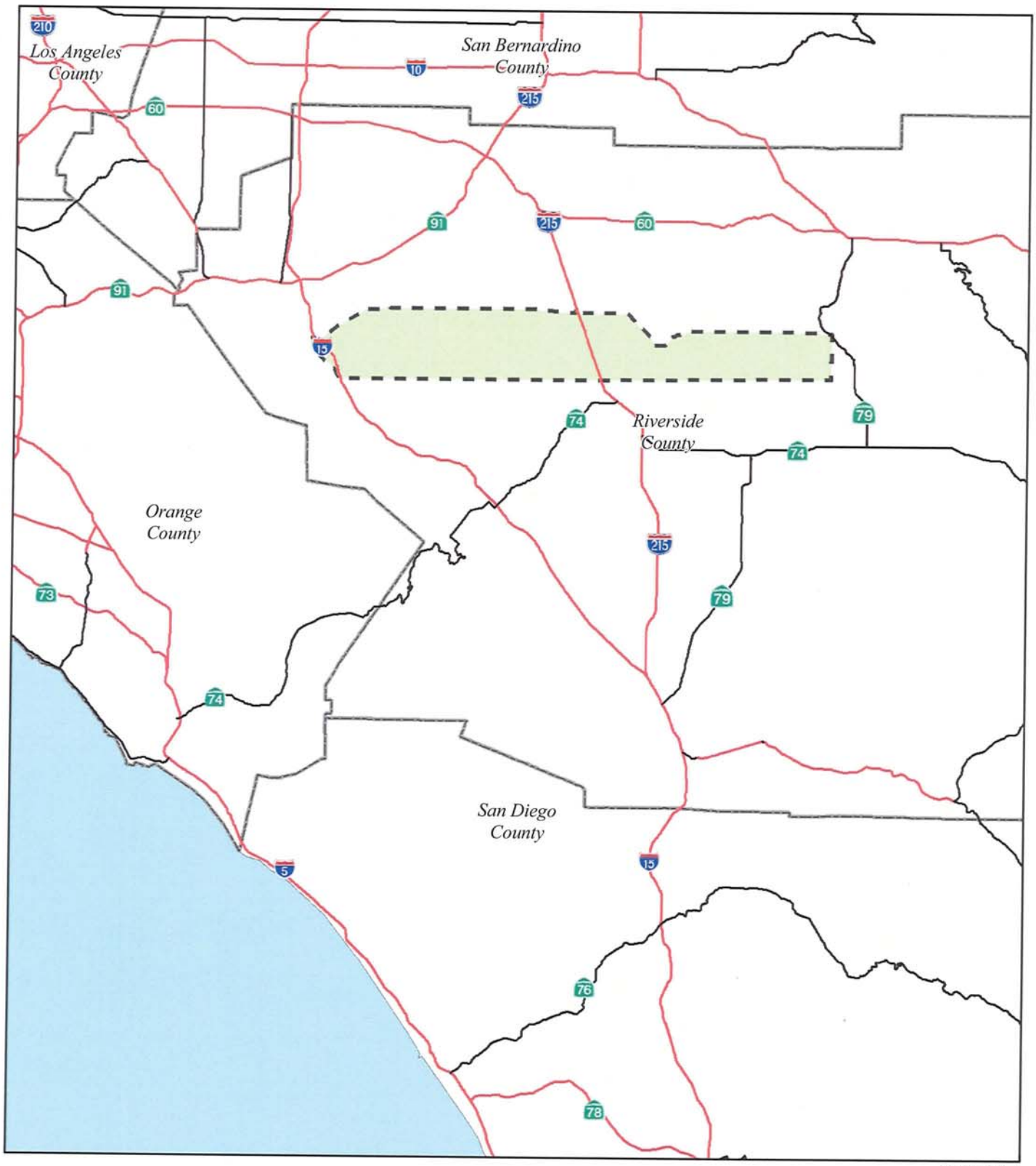

FIGURE 1

Mid County Parkway

Project Vicinity and Study Area

SOURCE: ESRI 2001

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Alternative 3: North of Lake Mathews/South Perris

Alignment Alternative 3 is a 6- to 10-lane limited access parkway alternative. Alternative 3 is located north of Lake Mathews and follows a southerly alignment through Perris. Alternative 3 is located south of Ramona Expressway from I-215 to just west of Antelope Road. The alignment would be located along or near the existing El Sobrante Road for much of the area directly north of Lake Matthews and follows a new alignment west of Lake Mathews. Alternative 3 would connect to system-to-system interchanges at I-15, at I-215, and at SR-79.

Alternative 4: South of Lake Mathews/North Perris

Alignment Alternative 4 is a 6- to 10-lane limited access parkway alternative. Alternative 4 is located south of Lake Mathews and follows a northerly alignment through Perris. This alternative would be located south of the existing Cajalco Road west of Lake Mathews Drive and located north of Ramona Expressway from I-215 to east of Evans Road. Alternative 4 would connect to system-to-system interchanges at I-15, at I-215, and at SR-79.

Alternative 5: South of Lake Mathews/South Perris

Alignment Alternative 5 is a 6- to 10-lane limited access parkway alternative. Alternative 5 is located south of Lake Mathews and follows a southerly alignment through Perris. This alternative is located south of the existing Cajalco Road west of Lake Mathews Drive and is located south of Ramona Expressway from I-215 to just west of Antelope Road. Alternative 5 would connect to system-to-system interchanges at I-15, at I-215, and at SR-79.

Alternative 6: General Plan/North and South of Lake Mathews and North Perris

Alignment Alternative 6 involves the implementation of arterial improvements included in the Riverside County General Plan, including a 6-lane arterial north of Lake Mathews and a 4-lane arterial south of Lake Mathews, west of El Sobrante Road, and a new 6- to 10-lane limited access parkway facility east of El Sobrante Road. This alternative is the same as Alternatives 2 and 4 described above east of I-215 and is located north of Ramona Expressway from I-215 to east of Evans Road. The proposed arterial street improvements north and south of Lake Mathews are consistent with the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element and generally follow the alignments shown in the General Plan.

Alternative 7: General Plan/North and South of Lake Mathews and South Perris

Alignment Alternative 7 involves the implementation of arterial improvements included in the Riverside County General Plan, including a 6-lane arterial north of Lake Mathews, a 4-lane arterial south of Lake Mathews, west of El Sobrante Road, and a new 6- to 10-lane limited access parkway facility east of El Sobrante Road. This alternative is the same as Alternatives 3 and 5 described above east of I-215 and follows a southerly alignment through Perris. The proposed arterial street improvements north and south of Lake Mathews are consistent with the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element and generally follow the alignments shown in the General Plan.

Alternative 8: General Plan Circulation Element

Alternative 8 represents 2030 traffic levels on the planned street network according to the Circulation Element of the Riverside County General Plan. This alignment alternative is the same as Alternative 1 but includes implementation of Cajalco Road and Ramona Expressway consistent with the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element. The traffic demand modeling for the MCP would be utilized to determine the ability of the adopted General Plan improvements to Cajalco Road and Ramona Expressway to meet the stated purpose and need of the MCP and to support the forecast travel demand for 2030.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

This section discusses the environmental review process necessary for the completion of the Mid County Parkway EIS/EIR. Since RCTC and Caltrans have committed to prepare an EIS/EIR, in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15060 and 15063, an Initial Study has not been completed for this NOP. This NOP contains a description of the environmental issues and analysis proposed to be provided in the EIS/EIR.

The EIS/EIR will assess potential project-related and cumulative impacts anticipated to result from implementation of the project, and will include all potentially feasible mitigation measures that could reduce these impacts. The EIS/EIR is intended to provide the necessary CEQA and NEPA clearance for implementation of the project.

The CEQA Guidelines require preparation of objective analysis and documentation to inform decision makers, the general public, and responsible agencies of the direct and indirect environmental effects of a proposed action, to provide mitigation measures that reduce or eliminate potential adverse impacts, and to identify and evaluate alternatives to the proposed project. RCTC will be the Lead Agency for CEQA; potential Responsible and Trustee Agencies are listed in Table A. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is the lead agency for preparation of the EIS pursuant to NEPA. After its publication, the Draft EIS/EIR will be available for public review and comment, and a public hearing will take place. After all comments have been responded to, RCTC may certify the Final EIR and select a preferred alternative. Following this action by the RCTC Board of Directors, RCTC and Caltrans will request FHWA's approval of the Final EIS and issuance of a Record of Decision. Once the NEPA and CEQA processes are complete, design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction of the Mid County Parkway project can proceed.

Table A: Potential Responsible and Trustee Agencies

Agency	Permit/Approval/Responsibility/Trust
United States Army Corps of Engineers	Section 404 Permit for impacts to jurisdictional waters of the U.S.
United States Fish and Wildlife Service	Western Riverside County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) Amendment (if necessary); Other MSHCP and HCP Amendments (if necessary); Section 7 consultation
California Public Utilities Commission	Approval of railroad grade separations
State Department of Fish and Game	Western Riverside County MSHCP Amendment (if necessary); Other MSHCP and HCP Amendments (if necessary); Implementation Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreements
State of California Water Quality Control Board and Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board.	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Systems Permit (NPDES)—construction storm water, Section 401 water quality certifications
County of Riverside	Project implementation within local jurisdiction
City of Corona	Project implementation within local jurisdiction
City of Perris	Project implementation within local jurisdiction
City of San Jacinto	Project implementation within local jurisdiction
Metropolitan Water District	Amendment to the Lake Mathews MSHCP
Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency (RCHCA)	Amendment to the Stephens' Kangaroo Rat (SKR) (if necessary)

PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The following explanation of probable environmental effects of the Mid County Parkway project is provided to help guide the analysis in the forthcoming EIS/EIR document and to provide information to the public and agencies reviewing this NOP:

Air Quality

Regional and local air quality may be affected by the project. Regional emissions will be evaluated to determine if implementation of the proposed project would result in any exceedance of State and federal ambient air quality standards. The air quality analysis will discuss both short-term impacts resulting from construction, as well as long-term impacts resulting from project operation. The analysis will also address whether the proposed improvements would exceed any thresholds of significance established by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). A carbon monoxide (CO) hot spot analysis will also be conducted and the results included in the EIS/EIR. Mitigation measures for air quality impacts during construction will be identified.

Biological Resources

Sensitive biological resources, such as plant life, wildlife, and wildlife habitat may be impacted by the Mid County Parkway project. Potential impacts include direct loss of habitat from grading or other construction activities, direct loss of animals and plants by project construction, loss or disruption of wildlife movement corridors, and habitat fragmentation.

Information on biological resources from the approved MSHCP for western Riverside County will be included in the Mid County Parkway project EIS/EIR as appropriate. Information from the Lake Mathews MSHCP and the Stephens' Kangaroo Rat HCP will also be included. The potential effects of the project on biological resources will be analyzed and documented in a Natural Environment Study (NES) that will be prepared in a manner consistent with Caltrans guidelines. The analysis will be based on a literature review and field surveys of sensitive plant species, small mammals, birds (including riparian birds and burrowing owls), jurisdictional waters, fairy shrimp, wildlife movement, and habitat connectivity. Focused species surveys will be conducted as required by the Western Riverside County MSHCP and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service permits for threatened and endangered species. Consistency with the Western Riverside County MSHCP and other applicable MSHCPs and HCPs will be addressed in the EIS/EIR.

Cultural Resources

The proposed alternatives have the potential to affect both prehistoric and historic cultural resources. Potential impacts include direct loss of resources from grading or other construction activities, as well as indirect effects resulting from construction of the new transportation facilities that may affect the historical context of a particular resource. A records search will be conducted through the Archaeological Information Center at UC Riverside to determine the location of known archaeological sites and any prehistoric resources that are listed or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Because the project requires clearance under NEPA, the EIS/EIR will include documentation of the project's compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Cultural resource studies will include records searches for each alternative, field surveys of previously unsurveyed areas, testing of sites as needed to determine significance, and evaluation of historic properties.

Floodplain Evaluation

The proposed project may affect floodplains, particularly for the San Jacinto River and Temescal Wash. The existing floodplain setting will be documented in the EIS/EIR along with an evaluation of potential floodplain impacts and encroachments. The determination of any affected floodplains will be based on the latest available Flood Insurance Rate Maps for incorporated and unincorporated areas of Riverside County. Potential impacts could include loss of beneficial floodplain values resulting from grading or other construction activities, as well as increased exposure of humans to floodplain risk.

Hazardous Waste

A hazardous waste Initial Site Assessment (ISA) will be prepared for the Mid County Parkway project. A records search of agency databases will be conducted to determine whether the proposed project would impact known hazardous waste sites. Field surveys will be conducted as necessary to determine the potential presence of unknown hazardous wastes within the corridor that could be impacted by construction of the proposed corridor improvements. Potential hazardous waste impacts could occur from either soil or groundwater contamination that exists within properties to be acquired for the improvements, or where contamination on an adjacent property would pose a health risk to construction workers.

Noise

Existing noise levels in the vicinity of the Mid County Parkway project will be documented in the EIS/EIR. A noise study will be conducted to evaluate projected noise levels resulting from construction and operation of the proposed project. The study will focus on identifying potential noise impacts to sensitive receptors, such as residential uses, exterior areas of commercial uses, hospitals, libraries, and parks. Potential noise impacts include increased noise exposure resulting from increased vehicular traffic adjacent to sensitive receptors. Construction impacts could result from noise generated by construction equipment such as graders and pile drivers.

Parks/Recreation and Section 4(f) Resources

Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (now at 49 USC 303) specifies that publicly owned public parks, recreation areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, or any significant historic site may not be used for projects that use federal funds unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of such land.

The Mid County Parkway project will incorporate all possible planning to minimize harm to 4(f) lands. The EIS/EIR will include an evaluation of potential impacts to 4(f) resources that could result from implementation of the Mid County Parkway project.

Community Impacts (including Environmental Justice and Farmlands)

A Community Impact Assessment will be prepared for the Mid County Parkway project that will address the potential community and socioeconomic impacts of the proposed Mid County Parkway project. The analysis will be conducted to determine potential socioeconomic impacts of the project, with an emphasis on compliance with Executive Order 12898 regarding Environmental Justice. The Community Impact Assessment will provide a description of existing land use, housing, employment, and population conditions in the vicinity of the project alternatives. The impact analysis will address the potential impacts on the residential population and local business community within the project impact area for each alternative, including land use compatibility impacts associated with the project. A draft Relocation Impact Report will be prepared to document displacements of homes and businesses. The analysis of land use will assess the impacts of each alternative on Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. Discussions on Environmental Justice, right-of-way displacements, relocation assistance, business impacts, neighborhood cohesion, and

fiscal impacts (i.e., estimated loss of property tax and sales tax revenues) will be included in the EIS/EIR. The analysis shall also address consistency with relevant local, regional, and state regulations and plans.

Visual

Implementation of the Mid County Parkway project may change the visual character and quality of the project area. A visual analysis will be included in the EIS/EIR to address how the project will affect the existing visual setting. The existing visual characteristics of the area surrounding each project alternative will be documented and significant visual resources will be identified in the analysis. Key issues to be considered in this analysis are the profile of the project (elevated, at-grade, or depressed), removal of vegetation (trees, etc.), the alteration of significant land forms, improvements to existing transportation facilities, and the construction of new facilities where none presently exist. Photographs from viewpoints near the project alternatives will be used to prepare view simulations to evaluate the potential visual impacts. Impacts shall be assessed in terms of views from the project and views of the project by sensitive viewers.

Water Resources

The Mid County Parkway project will be evaluated with respect to its potential effect on waters of the U.S. and State. The evaluation will initially focus on opportunities to avoid impacts to these waters, where feasible, by shifting alignments or applying project design features (e.g., using bridges to span channels rather than using culverts). The EIS/EIR will describe impacts to those water resources that cannot be avoided, and will include mitigation measures to reduce impacts on those resources. Potential impacts to water resources include direct impacts such as dredging or filling of streams, rivers, and lakes, as well as indirect effects to water resources resulting from increased runoff from impervious surfaces such as roads and bridges. Effects on a more regional watershed level will be assessed using available data from the Special Area Management Plans for western Riverside County currently being developed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Riverside County Flood Control District.

Geology and Soils

The EIS/EIR will discuss potential geological impacts of the proposed project, with an emphasis on whether implementation of the alternatives will result in any increased potential risk to persons or property, such as from landslides or seismic hazards. The EIS/EIR will also discuss the increased potential for soil erosion.

Public Services and Utilities

The EIS/EIR will discuss the potential for adverse impacts to public services (fire, police, schools, and other public facilities) and public utilities (gas, water, electricity, solid waste, and wastewater). Potential impacts to public services include delays to emergency vehicles during construction, effects on schools (both direct impacts if land acquisition is required, as well as indirect impacts such as

noise and safety), and access to public facilities. Potential impacts to public utilities include direct impacts where the transportation improvements may require relocation of existing utilities.

Transportation/Traffic

While the proposed project is expected to have a beneficial effect on regional traffic circulation, the EIS/EIR will analyze the effect of the alternatives on both regional and local traffic conditions. Adverse impacts may occur on other facilities where traffic volumes are increased as a result of any changes in local circulation resulting from the project.

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APPENDIX A

MAPS

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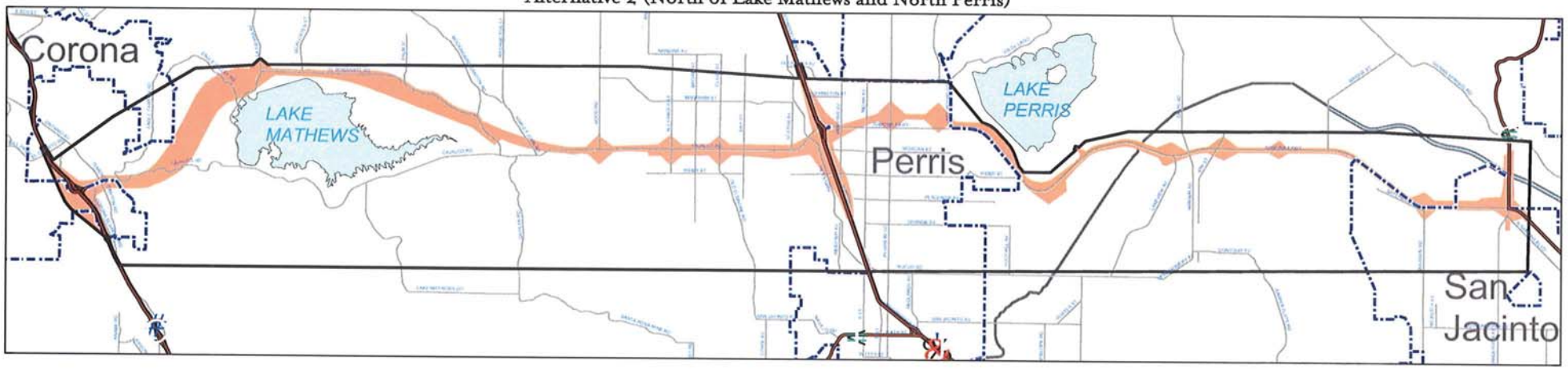
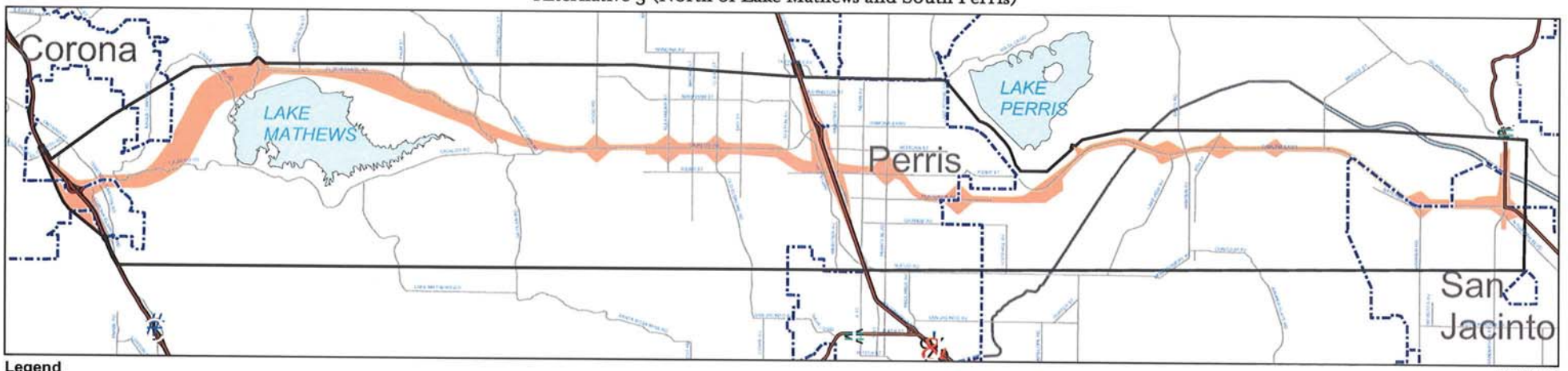
Alternative 2 (North of Lake Mathews and North Perris)



Alternative 3 (North of Lake Mathews and South Perris)



Legend

Study Area — State Highways — Alternative Alignment

City Limits — Major Roads

SOURCE: Jacobs Engineering (10/22/04), TBM (2003)

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FIGURE 2

Mid County Parkway Alternatives

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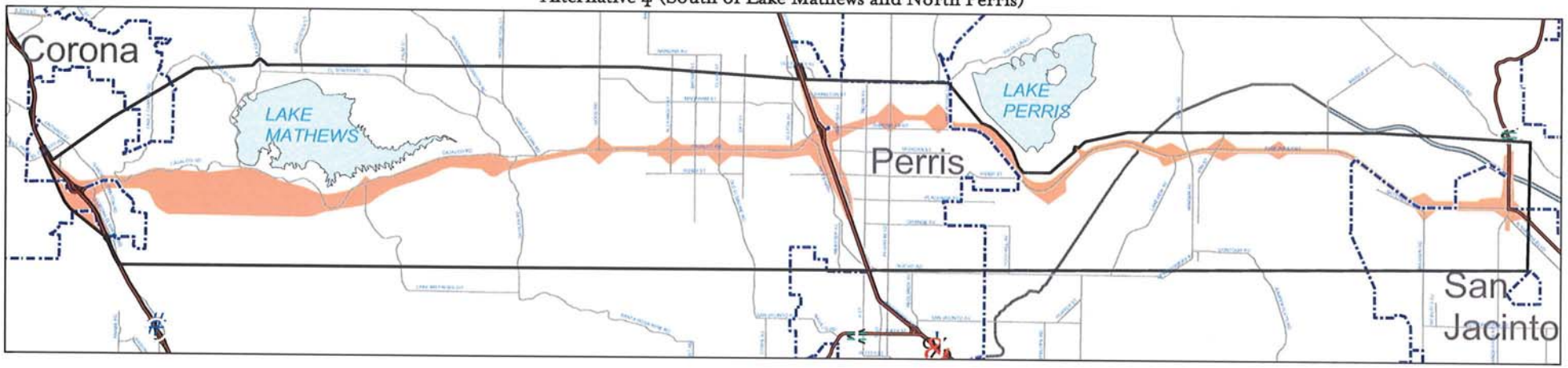
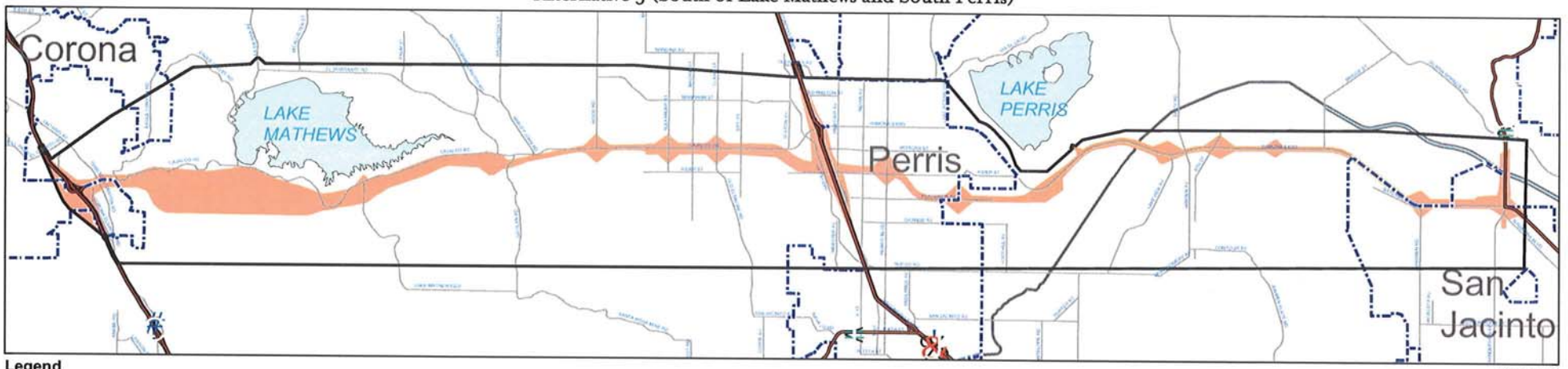
Alternative 4 (South of Lake Mathews and North Perris)



Alternative 5 (South of Lake Mathews and South Perris)



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Study Area — State Highways — Alternative Alignment

City Limits — Major Roads

SOURCE: Jacobs Engineering (10/22/04), TBM (2003)

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FIGURE 3

Mid County Parkway Alternatives

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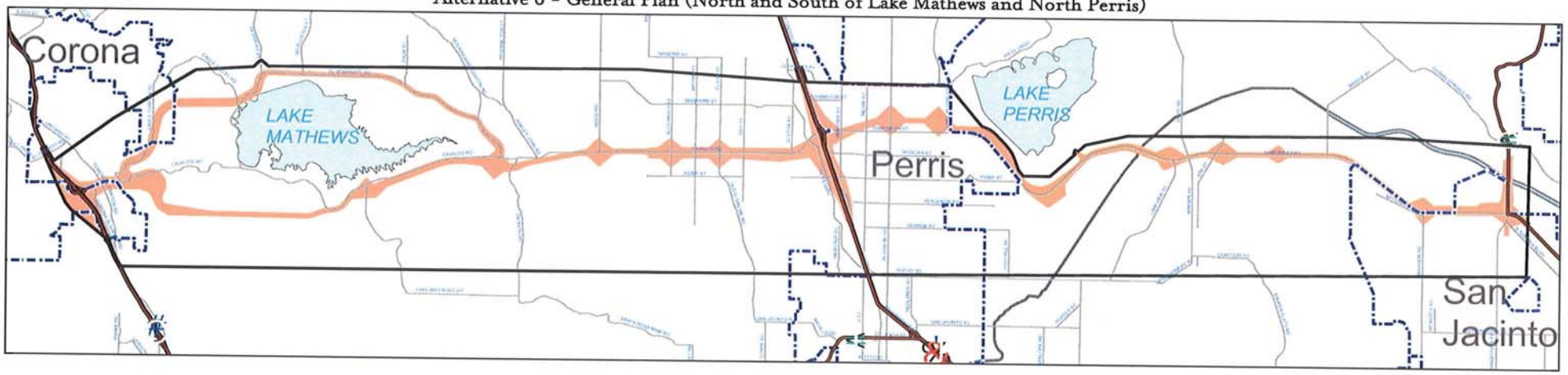
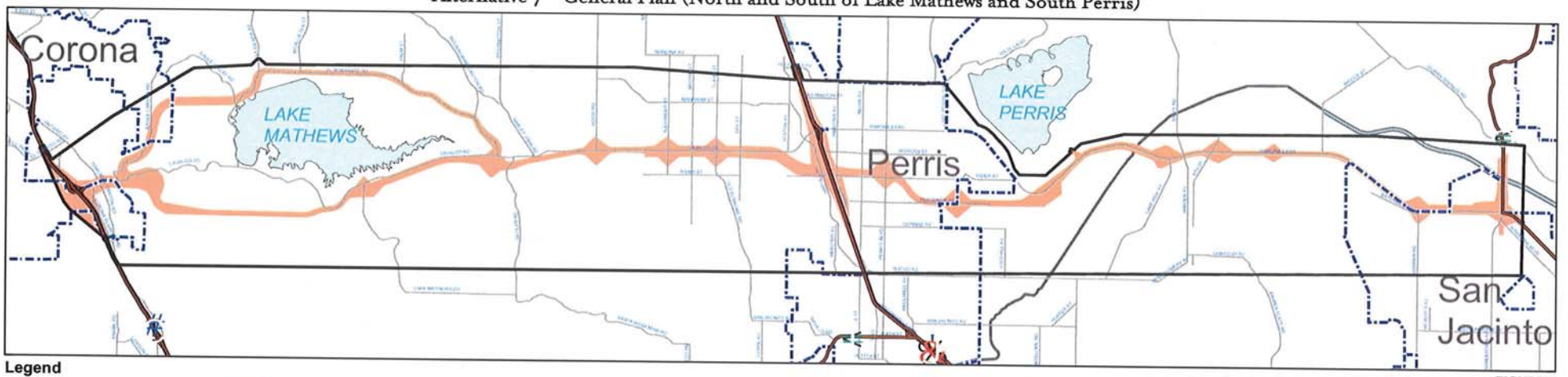
Alternative 6 - General Plan (North and South of Lake Mathews and North Perris)



Alternative 7 - General Plan (North and South of Lake Mathews and South Perris)



Legend

Study Area — State Highways — Alternative Alignment

City Limits — Major Roads

SOURCE: Jacobs Engineering (10/22/04), TBM (2003)

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FIGURE 4

Mid County Parkway Alternatives

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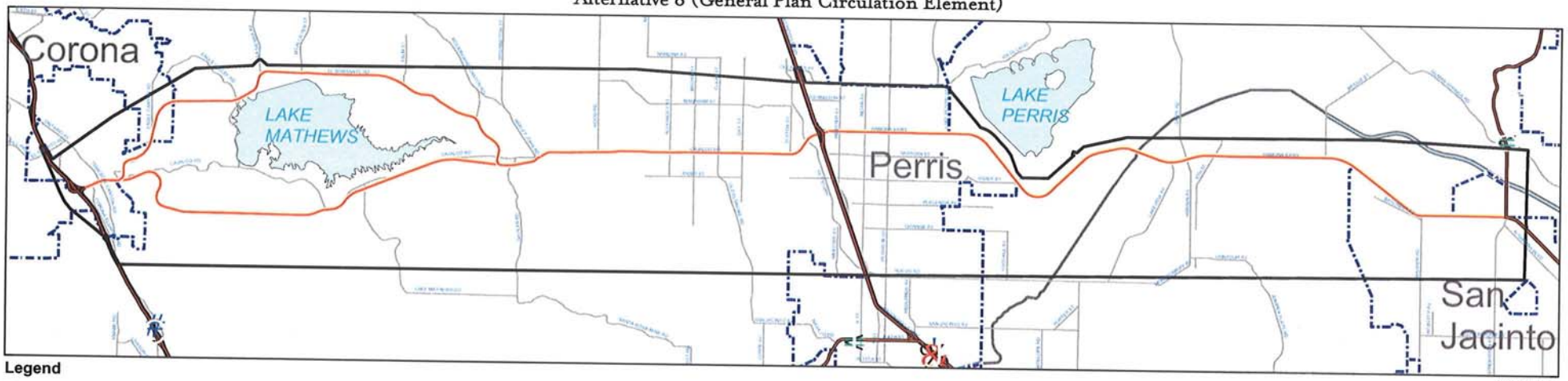
Alternative 8 (General Plan Circulation Element)



Legend

Study Area — State Highways — General Plan Circulation Element

City Limits — Major Roads

SOURCE: Jacobs Engineering (10/22/04), TBM (2003)

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FIGURE 5

Mid County Parkway Alternatives

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[4910-22]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT: RIVERSIDE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration, Department of Transportation

ACTION: Notice of Intent

SUMMARY: The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in cooperation with the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), is issuing this notice to advise the public that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be prepared for the proposed Mid County Parkway (MCP) project. The EIS will study alternatives to implement the proposed Mid County Parkway project in western Riverside County between Interstate 15 (I-15) to the west and State Route 79 (SR 79) to the east.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tay Dam, Senior Transportation Engineer, Federal Highway Administration - Los Angeles Metro Office, 201 N. Figueroa Street, Suite 1460, Los Angeles, California 90012. Telephone: (213) 202-3954. Fax: (213) 202-3961 or Cathy Bechtel, Riverside County Transportation Commission, 4080 Lemon Street, 3rd Floor, P.O. Box 12008, Riverside, CA 92502-2208. Telephone: (951) 787-7141. Fax: (951) 787-7920.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The proposed Mid County Parkway is located in an area of western Riverside County that is currently undergoing substantial population and employment growth. The study area is located on either side of the existing roadway known as Cajalco Road between I-15 and I-215 and as Ramona Expressway east of I-215. The

proposed action would adopt an alignment for the Mid County Parkway and construct a major limited access transportation facility to meet current and projected travel demand for 2030 from I-15 on the west to SR-79 on the east. The purpose of the project is to effectively and efficiently accommodate the regional east-west movement of people and goods between and through the cities of San Jacinto, Perris and Corona. The project will also provide roadway geometrics to meet State highway design standards, accommodate the Surface Transportation Assistance Act (STAA) National Network oversized trucks and provide a facility that is compatible with a future multimodal transportation system.

The Mid County Parkway project is a part of the long-term transportation planning project in Riverside County called the Community and Environmental Transportation Acceptability Process (CETAP). CETAP is a component of comprehensive land use and transportation planning in Riverside County known as the Riverside County Integrated Project. CETAP was one of the first seven projects in the nation to be processed under Executive Order 13274 for "Environmental Stewardship and Transportation Infrastructure Reviews".

Eight alternatives for the Mid County Parkway project have been developed for evaluation in the EIS, including a no action alternative. Many of the parkway alignment alternatives share common segments. Generally, Alternatives 2 through 5 vary in terms of whether the route is directed north or south of Lake Mathews and whether the route follows a northerly or southerly alignment through the City of Perris. Alternatives 6 and 7 incorporate the General Plan arterial designations for both Cajalco Road and El Sobrante west of Wood Road around Lake Mathews. The parkway component of Alternatives 6 and 7 is limited to the area east of Wood Road.

Alternatives under consideration include: (1) No Project/No Action; (2) North Lake

Mathews/North Perris Parkway Alternative; (3) North Lake Mathews/South Perris Parkway Alternative; (4) South Lake Mathews/North Perris Parkway Alternative; (5) South Lake Mathews/South Perris Parkway Alternative; (6) General Plan/North Perris Alternative; (7) General Plan/South Perris Alternative; and (8) General Plan Circulation Element.

These basic alternatives will have additional design variations and other engineering details. A final selection of study alternatives and their subset variations will not be made until all public and agency comments are reviewed following the scoping process.

Note: As required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, all other reasonable alternatives including a no-build alternative will be considered. These alternatives may be refined, combined with various different alternative elements or be removed from further consideration as more analysis is conducted on the project alternatives.

Letters describing the proposed action and soliciting comments will be sent to appropriate federal, State, and local agencies, and to private organizations and citizens who have previously expressed, or are known to have, an interest in this proposal. Three public scoping meetings will be held in December 2004. Public notice will be given of the time and place of these meetings.

Public hearings will be held after the draft EIS is completed. Public notice will be given of the time and place of the hearings. The draft EIS will be available for public and agency review and comment prior to the formal public hearings.

To ensure that the full range of issues related to the proposed action is addressed and all significant issues are identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments or questions concerning this proposed action and the EIS should be directed to the FHWA at the addresses provided above.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Research, Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal program and activities apply to his program.)

Issued on November 16, 2004

/s/ ***John E. Dewar***

Mr. John E. Dewar
Chief Operating Officer
California Division
Federal Highway Administration

Environmental Impact Statement: Riverside Count CA

[Federal Register: November 22, 2004 (Volume 69, Number 224)]
[Notices]
[Page 68002-68003]
From the Federal Register Online via GPO Access [wais.access.gpo.gov]
[DOCID:fr22no04-144]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Federal Highway Administration

Environmental Impact Statement: Riverside County, CA

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration, Department of Transportation.
ACTION: Notice of Intent.

SUMMARY: The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in cooperation with the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), is issuing this notice to advise the public that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be prepared for the proposed Mid County Parkway (MCP) project. The EIS will study alternatives to implement the proposed Mid County Parkway project in western Riverside County between Interstate 15 (I-15) to the west and State Route 79 (SR 79) to the east.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tay Dam, Senior Transportation Engineer, Federal Highway Administration--Los Angeles Metro Office, 201 N. Figueroa Street, Suite 1460, Los Angeles, California 90012. Telephone: (213) 202-3954. Fax: (213) 202-3961 or Cathy Bechtel, Riverside County Transportation Commission, 4080 Lemon Street, 3rd Floor, P.O. Box 12008, Riverside, CA 92502-2208. Telephone: (951) 787-7141. Fax: (951) 787-7920.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The proposed Mid County Parkway is located in an area of western Riverside County that is currently undergoing substantial population and employment growth. The study area is located on either side of the existing roadway known as Cajalco Road between I-15 and I-215 and as Ramona Expressway east of I-215. The proposed action would adopt an alignment for the Mid County Parkway and construct a major limited access transportation facility to meet current and projected travel demand for 2030 and I-15 on the west to SR-79 on the east. The purpose of the project is to effectively and efficiently accommodate the regional east-west movement of people and goods between and through the cities of San Jacinto, Perris and Corona. The project will also provide roadway geometries to meet State highway design standards, accommodate the Surface Transportation Assistance Act (STAA) National Network oversized trucks and provide a facility that is

compatible with a future multimodal transportation system.

The Mid County Parkway project is a part of the long-term transportation planning project in Riverside County called the Community and Environmental Transportation Acceptability Process (CETAP). CETAP is a component of comprehensive land use and transportation planning in Riverside County known as the Riverside County Integrated Project. CETAP was one of the first seven projects in the nation to be processed under Executive Order 13274 for ``Environmental Stewardship and Transportation Infrastructure Reviews''.

Eight alternatives for the Mid County Parkway project have been developed for evaluation in the EIS, including a no action alternative. Many of the parkway alignment alternatives share common segments. Generally, Alternatives 2 through 5 vary in terms of whether the route is directed north or south of Lake Mathews and whether the route follows a northerly or southerly alignment through the City of Perris. Alternatives 6 and 7 incorporate the General Plan arterial designations for both Cajalco Road and El Sobrante west of Wood Road around Lake Mathews. The parkway component of Alternatives 6 and 7 is limited to the area east of Wood Road.

Alternatives under consideration include: (1) No Project/No Action; (2) North Lake Mathews/North Perris Parkway Alternative; (3) North Lake Mathews/South Perris Parkway Alternative; (4) South Lake Mathews/North Perris Parkway Alternative; (5) South Lake Mathews/South Perris Parkway Alternative; (6) General Plan/North Perris Alternative; (7) General Plan/South Perris Alternative; and (8) General Plan Circulation Element. These basic alternatives will have additional design variations and other engineering details. A final selection of study alternatives and their subset variations will not be made until all public and agency comments are reviewed following the scoping process.

Note: As required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, all other reasonable alternatives including a no-build alternative will be considered. These alternatives may be refined, combined with various different alternative elements or be removed from further consideration as more analysis is conducted on the project alternatives. Letters describing the proposed action and soliciting comments will be sent to appropriate federal, State, and local agencies, and to private organizations and citizens who have previously expressed, or are known to have, an interest in this proposal. Three public scoping meetings will be held in December 2004. Public notice will be given of the time and place of these meetinc

Public hearings will be held after the draft EIS is completed. Public notice will be given of the time and place of the hearings. The draft EIS will be available for public and agency review and comment prior to the formal public hearings.

To ensure that the full range of issues related to the proposed action is addressed and all significant issues are identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments or questions concerning this proposed action and the EIS should be directed to the FHWA at the addresses provided above.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Research, Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal program and activities apply to this program)

[[Page 68003]]

Issued on November 16, 2004.

Mr. John E. Dewar,
Chief Operating Officer, California Division, Federal Highway Administration.

[FR Doc. 04-25805 Filed 11-19-04; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 4910-22-M

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SUPPLEMENTAL NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY PROJECT SCH #2004111103

INTRODUCTION

Since November 2004, when the original NOP (Notice of Preparation) was issued for the proposed Mid County Parkway (MCP) project, the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) has been conducting engineering and environmental studies in support of the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) for the project. In addition, RCTC has also engaged in ongoing consultation with various public agencies and other interested parties. As a result of these technical studies and public consultation efforts, several refinements have been made to the suite of alternatives presented in the November 2004 NOP.

This document is the Supplemental NOP of an EIR/EIS for the proposed MCP project from Interstate 15 (I-15) on the west to State Route 79 (SR-79) on the east within western Riverside County, California. The Supplemental NOP is being issued because of refinements made to the suite of alternatives: the elimination of Alternatives 2 and 3 that included a parkway north of Lake Mathews, rerouting a segment of two alternatives away from the Perris Dam, renumbering Alternative 8 to Alternative 1B (No Action/No Project General Plan Circulation Element conditions), and adding Alternative 9 (Far South Alternative). By issuing this Supplemental NOP, RCTC would like to solicit input from public agencies and other interested parties regarding the revised suite of alternatives prior to the release of the Draft EIR/EIS for public review.

Under the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the RCTC is the Lead Agency for environmental review of the proposed project and must evaluate the potentially significant environmental effects. The RCTC has determined that an EIR must be prepared to assess the proposed project's effects on the environment, to identify potentially significant impacts, to identify feasible mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate potentially significant environmental impacts, and to discuss potentially feasible alternatives to the project that may accomplish basic project objectives while lessening or eliminating any potential significant project impacts.

Since the proposed project is to be partially funded with federal transportation funds, environmental compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is also required. An EIS will be prepared for NEPA compliance. To ensure coordination between the NEPA and CEQA processes and to avoid duplication of effort, a joint CEQA/NEPA document will be prepared. The joint document will be an EIR/EIS (an EIR for CEQA and an EIS for NEPA). The purpose of the Supplemental NOP is to describe the refinements made to the suite of alternatives since the original NOP was issued in November 2004, describe the probable environmental effects of the project that will be evaluated in

the EIR/EIS, and solicit input regarding the scope of the analysis of the revised suite of alternatives to be included in the EIR/EIS.

BACKGROUND

The MCP project was identified as a key east-west regional transportation corridor as a result of several years of comprehensive land use and transportation planning in Riverside County through the Riverside County Integrated Project (RCIP). The RCIP is an unprecedented, multi-year planning effort to simultaneously prepare environmental, transportation, housing, and development guidelines for Riverside County for the first half of the twenty-first century. The purpose of the RCIP is to address the planning, environmental, and transportation issues that would result from the anticipated doubling of population in Riverside County, from 1.5 million residents currently to approximately 3.0 million by 2020. The RCIP includes three components: (1) a new General Plan for Riverside County, adopted on October 7, 2003; (2) a Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) for western Riverside County (approved by the County in June 2003 and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in June 2004); and (3) the Community and Environmental Transportation Acceptability Process (CETAP). In addition, the RCIP Partnership Action Plan (September 2000) commits participating federal, State, and county governments to incorporate the western Riverside County Special Area Management Plan (SAMP) into all three RCIP planning efforts. The purpose of the SAMP is to provide for comprehensive aquatic resource protection and reasonable economic growth.

CETAP study efforts were jointly undertaken by the RCTC and the County of Riverside. CETAP includes the study of two intercounty corridors (Riverside County to Orange County and Riverside County to San Bernardino County) and two intra-county transportation corridors. The "internal" (intra-county) corridors included a north-south and an east-west study area. Tier 1 analyses and environmental documents were initiated for the two corridors in the fall of 2000. The purpose of the Tier 1 efforts was to select a preferred alternative and preserve needed right-of-way. A Draft Tier 1 EIR/EIS was prepared for the east-west (Hemet to Corona/Lake Elsinore [HCLE]) Corridor and circulated for public review in July 2002. The Draft EIR/EIS considered a suite of 14 "Build" alternatives that extended from San Jacinto/Hemet on the east to Corona/Lake Elsinore on the west. Several alternatives were variations of routes along Ramona Expressway and Cajalco/El Sobrante Road, at the northwestern portion of the HCLE study area. Transportation analyses were conducted for these and other alternatives to the south, along portions of State Route 74 (SR-74), Domenigoni Parkway, Ethanac Road, and Newport Road.

The analyses indicated the alternative with the greatest transportation benefit was located along Ramona Expressway, Cajalco Road, and El Sobrante Road, with a connection to I-15. This alternative demonstrated it best met traffic needs by providing the greatest benefits in terms of reductions in travel time, and congestion relief. In addition, public comments identified concerns regarding adverse impacts to existing communities for the portion of the alternatives located north of Lake Mathews. As a result of the information contained in the Draft Tier 1 EIR/EIS regarding transportation benefits and the community input received on the HCLE alternatives, the RCTC Board accepted a staff recommendation in June 2003 to proceed with the accelerated preparation of a project-level environmental document for an east-west alternative that included the Ramona Expressway/Cajalco Road alignment located south of Lake Mathews. This action by the RCTC terminated the Tier 1 study efforts and began a focused, project-level study effort for the MCP project.

In 2005, RCTC and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) conducted a Value Analysis (VA) Study to determine whether there were additional alignment refinements that could more effectively and efficiently meet the project purpose and need. As a result of the VA Study, new information became available with regard to the practicability of some of the alternative alignments, as well as opportunities to further avoid or minimize adverse environmental impacts to existing habitat reserves, Section 404 and Section 4(f) resources, and existing communities. In addition, during this same period, the MCP engineering and environmental project team conducted engineering studies, environmental studies, field work, public scoping meetings, and traffic modeling for the MCP project. Based on these studies and analyses, RCTC considered and approved a refined set of seven alternatives to be evaluated in the Draft EIR/EIS, five "Build" alternatives, and two "No Action\No Project" alternatives. The refined set of alternatives eliminated Alternatives 2 and 3 that included a parkway north of Lake Mathews due to engineering feasibility issues, rerouted a segment of two alternatives away from the Perris Dam, renumbered Alternative 8 to Alternative 1B (No Action/No Project General Plan Circulation Element conditions), and added Alternative 9 (Far South Alternative), which avoids the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan) Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) Reserve. No preferred alternative has been identified by the lead agencies.

The Circulation Element of the Riverside County General Plan currently identifies Ramona Expressway and Cajalco Road as future expressways of four to eight lanes, and realigns the portion of Cajalco Road south of Lake Mathews. The proposed MCP project executes the intent of the prior RCTC and County actions with regard to the HCLE Corridor and is consistent with the intent of the County's Circulation Element, which recognizes that the decisions regarding the CETAP corridors will result in appropriate amendments to the General Plan.

The MCP project is consistent with Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) adopted 2004 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), which emphasizes the identification of long-range corridors. The internal east-west corridor is identified on the RTP map of User Fee-Backed Capacity Improvements.

PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of the proposed project is to provide a transportation facility that will effectively and efficiently accommodate regional east-west movement of people and goods between and through San Jacinto, Perris, and Corona within western Riverside County. More specifically, the project objectives are to provide a transportation facility that will:

- Provide increased capacity to support the forecast travel demand for the 2035 design year;
- Provide a limited access parkway;
- Provide roadway geometrics to meet State highway design standards;
- Accommodate Surface Transportation Assistance Act (STAA) National Network for oversized trucks;
- Provide a parkway that is compatible with a future multimodal transportation system.

SUMMARY PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project is located in western Riverside County. Figure 1.1 depicts the proposed study area for the MCP project, the surrounding vicinity, and the regional location of the project. The study area is approximately 32 miles long and ranges from 1 to 4 miles in width. The alternatives to be addressed in the EIR/EIS are described below.

The MCP project refined suite of alternatives includes two No Project/No Action alternatives (Alternatives 1A and 1B) and five "Build" alternatives (Alternatives 4, 5, 6, 7, and 9). Many of the alternatives share common segments. Maps of the alternatives are provided in Attachment A.

Alternative 1A: No Project/No Action—Existing Ground Conditions

Alternative 1A represents 2035 traffic on the planned street network except for future improvements to Cajalco Road and Ramona Expressway, which would remain as they exist today. Construction of the MCP project would not be implemented with the No Project/No Action Alternative 1A. The future east-west traffic described in the study area would be served by the existing Cajalco Road and El Sobrante Road between I-15 and Interstate 215 (I-215) and by the existing Ramona Expressway between I-215 and SR-79. This alternative assumes 2035 land use conditions and implementation of planned improvements to the regional and local circulation system as accounted for in the adopted Riverside County General Plan (2003), RCTC's Measure A program, and other adopted plans and policies.

Alternative 1B: No Project/No Action—General Plan Circulation Element Conditions

Alternative 1B represents 2035 traffic levels on the planned street network, according to the Circulation Element of the Riverside County General Plan. Construction of the MCP project would not be implemented with No Project/No Action Alternative 1B. This alternative is the same as Alternative 1A but includes the implementation of Cajalco Road and Ramona Expressway consistent with the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element.

Alternative 4: South of Lake Mathews/North Perris

Alternative 4 is a six- to eight-lane limited access parkway alternative. Alternative 4 is located south of Lake Mathews and follows a northerly alignment through Perris. This alternative would be located south of the existing Cajalco Road west of Lake Mathews Drive and located north of Ramona Expressway from I-215 to the Perris Drain, from where it follows the Perris Drain on an elevated structure southerly to Placentia Avenue. From that point, Alternative 4 continues east through the McCanna Hills, where it follows the Ramona Expressway. Alternative 4 would connect to system-to-system interchanges at I-15, I-215, and SR-79.

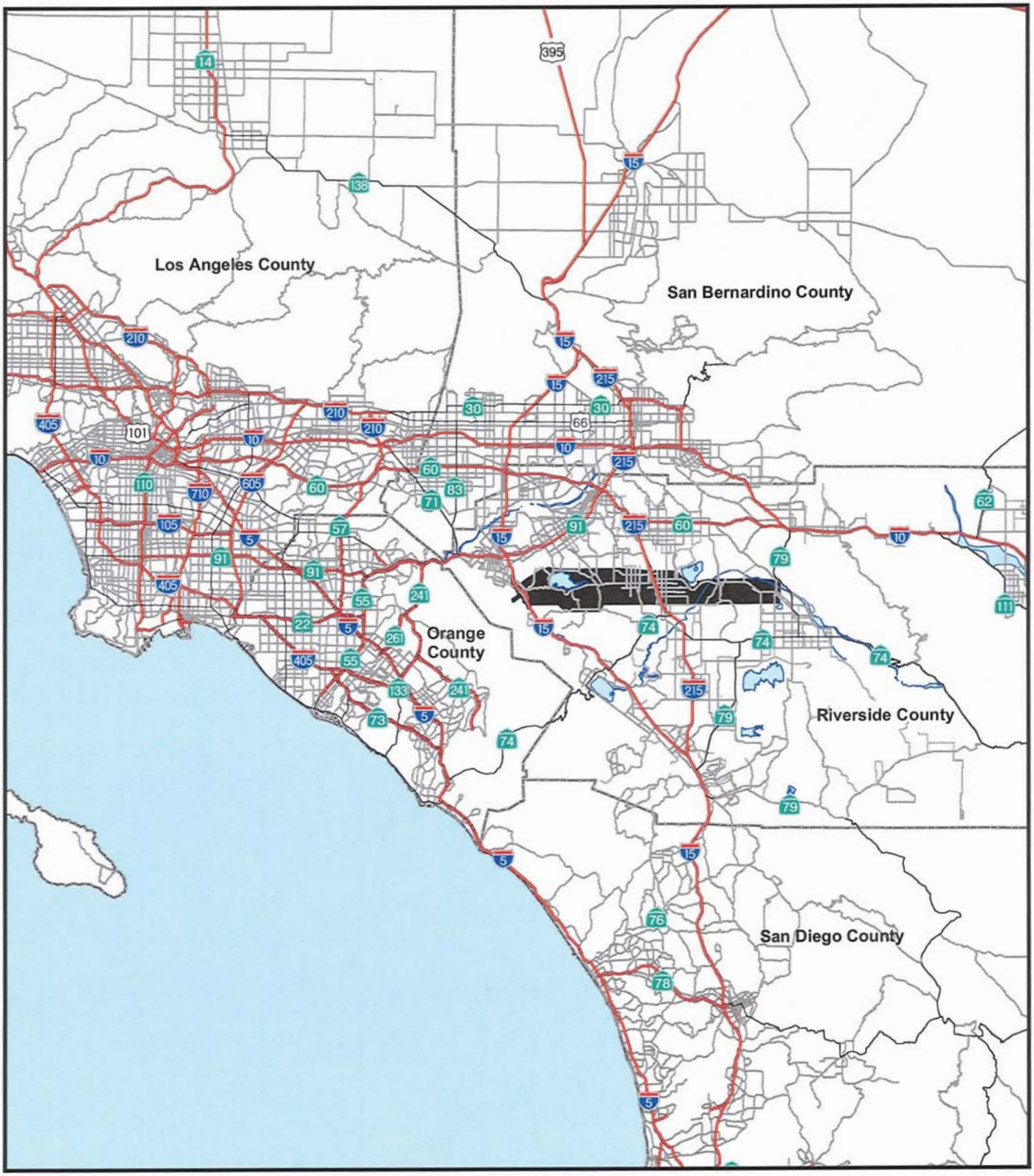

Figure 1.1

Legend

Mid County Parkway Study Area

SOURCE: TBM (2006), Jacobs Engineering (2007)

0 12.5 25 50 Kilometers

0 8 16 32 Miles

Project Vicinity and Study Area

KP 0.0/51.0 (PM 0.0/31.7) EA 08-0F3200

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Alternative 5: South of Lake Mathews/South Perris

Alternative 5 is a six- to eight-lane limited access parkway alternative. Alternative 5 is located south of Lake Mathews and follows a southerly alignment through Perris. This alternative is located south of the existing Cajalco Road west of Lake Mathews Drive and is located south of Ramona Expressway from I-215 (following Rider Street and Placentia Avenue) to just west of Antelope Road. Alternative 5 would connect to system-to-system interchanges at I-15, I-215, and SR-79.

Alternative 6: General Plan/North and South of Lake Mathews and North Perris

Alternative 6 involves the implementation of arterial improvements included in the Riverside County General Plan, including a six-lane arterial north of Lake Mathews and a four-lane limited access expressway south of Lake Mathews, west of El Sobrante Road, and a new six- to eight-lane limited access parkway east of El Sobrante Road. This alternative is the same as Alternative 4 described above, east of El Sobrante Road. The proposed arterial street improvements north and south of Lake Mathews are consistent with the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element and generally follow the alignments shown in the General Plan.

Alternative 7: General Plan/North and South of Lake Mathews and South Perris

Alternative 7 involves the implementation of arterial improvements included in the Riverside County General Plan, including a six-lane arterial north of Lake Mathews, a four-lane limited-access expressway south of Lake Mathews, west of El Sobrante Road, and a new six- to eight-lane limited access parkway east of El Sobrante Road. This alternative is the same as Alternative 5 described above, east of El Sobrante Road. The proposed arterial street improvements north and south of Lake Mathews are consistent with the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element and generally follow the alignments shown in the General Plan.

Alternative 9: Far South/Placentia Avenue

Alternative 9 is a four- to six-lane controlled access parkway from the I-15 interchange to Old Elsinore Road, south of both Lake Mathews and Mead Valley. The alternative is aligned south of Metropolitan HCP Reserve lands and traverses the Gavilan Hills area. From Old Elsinore Road to the I-215 interchange, Alternative 9 is a six- to eight-lane controlled access parkway. East of I-215, Alternative 9 follows Placentia Avenue; east of Evans Road, it follows a common alignment with Alternatives 4–7 through McCanna Hills and along the Ramona Expressway. Alternative 9 is a six- to eight-lane controlled-access parkway between I-215 and SR-79. Alternative 9 would connect to system-to-system interchanges at I-15, I-215, and SR-79.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

This section discusses the environmental review process necessary for the completion of the MCP EIR/EIS. Since RCTC has committed to prepare an EIR/EIS in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15060 and 15063, an Initial Study has not been completed for this NOP. This NOP contains a description of the environmental issues and analysis proposed to be provided in the EIR/EIS.

The EIR/EIS will assess potential project-related, indirect, and cumulative impacts anticipated to result from implementation of the project, and will include all potentially feasible mitigation measures that could reduce these impacts. The EIR/EIS is intended to provide the necessary CEQA and NEPA clearance for implementation of the project.

The CEQA Guidelines require preparation of objective analysis and documentation to inform decision makers, the general public, and responsible agencies of the direct and indirect environmental effects of a proposed action, to provide mitigation measures that reduce or eliminate potential adverse impacts, and to identify and evaluate alternatives to the proposed project. RCTC will be the Lead Agency for CEQA; potential Responsible and Trustee Agencies are listed in Table A. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is the lead agency for preparation of the EIS pursuant to NEPA. After its publication, the Draft EIR/EIS will be available for public review and comment, and a public hearing will take place. After all comments have been responded to, RCTC may certify the Final EIR and select a preferred alternative. Following this action by the RCTC Board of Directors, RCTC and Caltrans will request FHWA's approval of the Final EIS and issuance of a Record of Decision. Once the NEPA and CEQA processes are complete, design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction of the MCP project can proceed.

PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The following explanation of probable environmental effects of the MCP project is provided to help guide the analysis in the forthcoming EIR/EIS document and to provide information to the public and agencies reviewing this NOP. As noted previously, environmental technical studies were initiated in 2004 concurrent with the issuance of the original NOP.

Air Quality

Regional and local air quality may be affected by the project. Regional emissions will be evaluated to determine if implementation of the proposed project would result in any exceedance of State and federal ambient air quality standards. The air quality analysis will discuss both short-term impacts resulting from construction, as well as long-term impacts resulting from project operation. The analysis will also address whether the proposed improvements would exceed any thresholds of significance established by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). A carbon monoxide (CO) hot spot analysis, PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ analysis, and Mobile Source Air Toxins (MSAT) analysis will also be conducted, and the results will be included in the EIR/EIS. Mitigation measures for air quality impacts during construction will be identified.

Biological Resources

Sensitive biological resources, such as plant life, wildlife, and wildlife habitat may be impacted by the MCP project. Potential impacts include direct loss of habitat from grading or other construction activities, direct loss of animals and plants by project construction, loss or disruption of wildlife movement corridors, and habitat fragmentation.

Table A: Potential Responsible and Trustee Agencies

Agency	Permit/Approval	Status
United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	Section 7 consultation for Threatened and Endangered Species Concur on RCTC's MSHCP Consistency Determination Concurrence on Determination of Biologically Equivalent or Superior Preservation (DBESP) Approval of amendment to El Sobrante Landfill Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (USA Waste is permittee) Consult with Corps on Section 404 permit	To be conducted following identification of a Preferred Alternative
United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps)	Section 404 Permit for filling or dredging waters of the United States	To be submitted following identification of a Preferred Alternative
California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG)	Section 1602 Agreement for Streambed Alteration Concur on RCTC's MSHCP Consistency Determination Approval of amendment to El Sobrante Landfill Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (USA Waste is permittee)	Application to be submitted prior to construction
California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)	Encroachment Permit for Construction within State highway right-of-way	Application to be submitted prior to construction
State Water Resources Control Board	Water Discharge Permit, approval of Notice of Intent to comply with General Construction Activity NPDES Permit	Application to be submitted prior to construction
Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (RCA)	Concur on RCTC's MSHCP Consistency Determination	To be conducted following identification of a Preferred Alternative
County of Riverside, Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency (RCHCA)	Stephens' kangaroo rat (SKR) Reserve HCP Consistency finding	To be conducted following identification of a Preferred Alternative
Regional Water Quality Control Board 8, Santa Ana Region	Section 401 Water Quality certification	Section 401 application to be submitted following identification of a Preferred Alternative
County of Riverside, City of Corona, City of Perris, and City of San Jacinto	Freeway Agreement with Caltrans should the MCP be adopted as a State highway by the California Transportation Commission Approval of encroachment permits and street construction permits, street closures and rerouting, and associated improvements in the public rights-of-way	Actions/permits would be issued prior to start of construction

Agency	Permit/Approval	Status
Riverside County Flood Control District (RCFCD)	Encroachment permits for improvements affecting RCFCD facilities	Application(s) to be submitted prior to construction
Metropolitan Water District of Southern California	Lake Mathews Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) Amendment for Alternatives (4-7)	To be determined after the identification of a Preferred Alternative

Information on biological resources from the approved MSHCP for western Riverside County will be included in the MCP project EIR/EIS as appropriate. Information from the Lake Mathews MSHCP, the Stephens' kangaroo rat HCP, and the El Sobrante Landfill HCP will also be included. The potential effects of the project on biological resources will be analyzed and documented in a Natural Environment Study (NES) that will be prepared in a manner consistent with Caltrans guidelines. The analysis will be based on a literature review and field surveys of sensitive plant species, small mammals, birds (including riparian birds and burrowing owls), jurisdictional waters, fairy shrimp, wildlife movement, and habitat connectivity. Focused species surveys will be conducted as required by the western Riverside County MSHCP. Consistency with the western Riverside County MSHCP and other applicable HCPs will be addressed in the EIR/EIS.

Cultural Resources

The proposed alternatives have the potential to affect both prehistoric and historic cultural resources. Potential impacts include direct loss of resources from grading or other construction activities, as well as indirect effects resulting from construction of the new transportation facilities that may affect the historical context of a particular resource. A records search has been conducted through the Archaeological Information Center at University of California Riverside to determine the location of known archaeological sites and any prehistoric resources that are listed or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Because the project requires clearance under NEPA, the EIR/EIS will include documentation of the project's compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Cultural resource studies will include records searches for each alternative, field surveys of previously unsurveyed areas, testing of sites as needed to determine significance, and evaluation of historic properties.

Floodplain Evaluation

The proposed project may affect floodplains, particularly for the San Jacinto River and Temescal Wash. The existing floodplain setting will be documented in the EIR/EIS along with an evaluation of potential floodplain impacts and encroachments. The determination of any affected floodplains will be based on the latest available Flood Insurance Rate Maps for incorporated and unincorporated areas of Riverside County. Potential impacts could include loss of beneficial floodplain values resulting from grading or other construction activities, as well as increased exposure of humans to floodplain risk.

Hazardous Waste

A hazardous waste Initial Site Assessment (ISA) will be prepared for the MCP project. A records search of agency databases will be conducted to determine whether the proposed project would impact known hazardous waste sites. Field surveys will be conducted as necessary to determine the potential presence of unknown hazardous wastes within the corridor that could be impacted by construction of the proposed corridor improvements. Potential hazardous waste impacts could occur from either soil or groundwater contamination that exists within properties to be acquired for the improvements, or where contamination on an adjacent property would pose a health risk to construction workers.

Noise

Existing noise levels in the vicinity of the MCP project will be documented in the EIR/EIS. A noise study will be conducted to evaluate projected noise levels resulting from construction and operation of the proposed project. The study will focus on identifying potential noise impacts to sensitive receptors, such as residential uses, exterior areas of commercial uses, hospitals, libraries, and parks. Potential noise impacts include increased noise exposure resulting from increased vehicular traffic adjacent to sensitive receptors. Construction impacts could result from noise generated by construction equipment such as graders and pile drivers.

Parks/Recreation and Section 4(f) Resources

Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (now at 49 USC 303) specifies that publicly-owned parks, recreation areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, or any significant historic site may not be used for projects that use federal funds unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of such land. The MCP project will incorporate all possible planning to minimize harm to 4(f) lands. The EIR/EIS will include an evaluation of potential impacts to 4(f) resources that could result from implementation of the MCP project.

Community Impacts (including Environmental Justice and Farmlands)

A Community Impact Assessment will be prepared for the MCP project that will address the potential community and socioeconomic impacts of the proposed MCP project. The analysis will be conducted to determine potential socioeconomic impacts of the project, with an emphasis on compliance with Executive Order 12898 regarding Environmental Justice. The Community Impact Assessment will provide a description of existing land use, housing, employment, and population conditions in the vicinity of the project alternatives. The impact analysis will address the potential impacts on the residential population and local business community within the project impact area for each alternative, including land use compatibility impacts associated with the project. A draft Relocation Impact Report will be prepared to document displacements of homes and businesses. The land use analysis will assess the impacts of each alternative on Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. Discussions on growth, Environmental Justice, right-of-way displacements, relocation assistance, business impacts, neighborhood cohesion, and fiscal impacts (i.e., estimated loss of property tax and sales tax revenues) will be included in the EIR/EIS. The analysis shall also address consistency with relevant local, regional, and state regulations and plans.

Visual

Implementation of the MCP project may change the visual character and quality of the project area. A visual analysis will be included in the EIR/EIS to address how the project will affect the existing visual setting. The existing visual characteristics of the area surrounding each project alternative will be documented and significant visual resources will be identified in the analysis. Key issues to be considered in this analysis are the profile of the project (elevated, at-grade, or depressed), removal of vegetation (trees, etc.), the alteration of significant land forms, improvements to existing transportation facilities, and the construction of new facilities where none presently exist. Photographs from viewpoints near the project alternatives will be used to prepare view simulations to evaluate the potential visual impacts. Impacts shall be assessed in terms of views from the project and views of the project by sensitive viewers.

Water Resources

The MCP project will be evaluated with respect to its potential effect on waters of the U.S. and State. The evaluation will initially focus on opportunities to avoid impacts to these waters, where feasible, by shifting alignments or applying project design features (e.g., using bridges to span channels rather than using culverts). The EIR/EIS will describe impacts to those water resources that cannot be avoided, and will include mitigation measures to reduce impacts on those resources. Potential impacts to water resources include direct impacts such as dredging or filling of streams, rivers, and lakes, as well as indirect effects to water resources resulting from increased runoff from impervious surfaces such as roads and bridges. Effects on a more regional watershed level will be assessed using available data from the Special Area Management Plans for western Riverside County currently being developed by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and the Riverside County Flood Control District (RCFCD).

Geology and Soils

The EIR/EIS will discuss potential geological impacts of the proposed project, with an emphasis on whether implementation of the alternatives will result in any increased potential risk to persons or property, such as from landslides or seismic hazards. The EIR/EIS will also discuss the increased potential for soil erosion.

Public Services and Utilities

The EIR/EIS will discuss the potential for adverse impacts to public services (fire, police, schools, and other public facilities) and public utilities (gas, water, electricity, solid waste, and wastewater). Potential impacts to public services include delays to emergency vehicles during construction, effects on schools (both direct impacts if land acquisition is required, as well as indirect impacts such as noise and safety), and access to public facilities. Potential impacts to public utilities include direct impacts where the transportation improvements may require relocation of existing utilities.

Transportation/Traffic

While the proposed project is expected to have a beneficial effect on regional traffic circulation, the EIR/EIS will analyze the effect of the alternatives on both regional and local traffic conditions. Adverse impacts may occur on other facilities where traffic volumes are increased as a result of any changes in local circulation resulting from the project.

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APPENDIX A

MAPS

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Temescal Wash Area

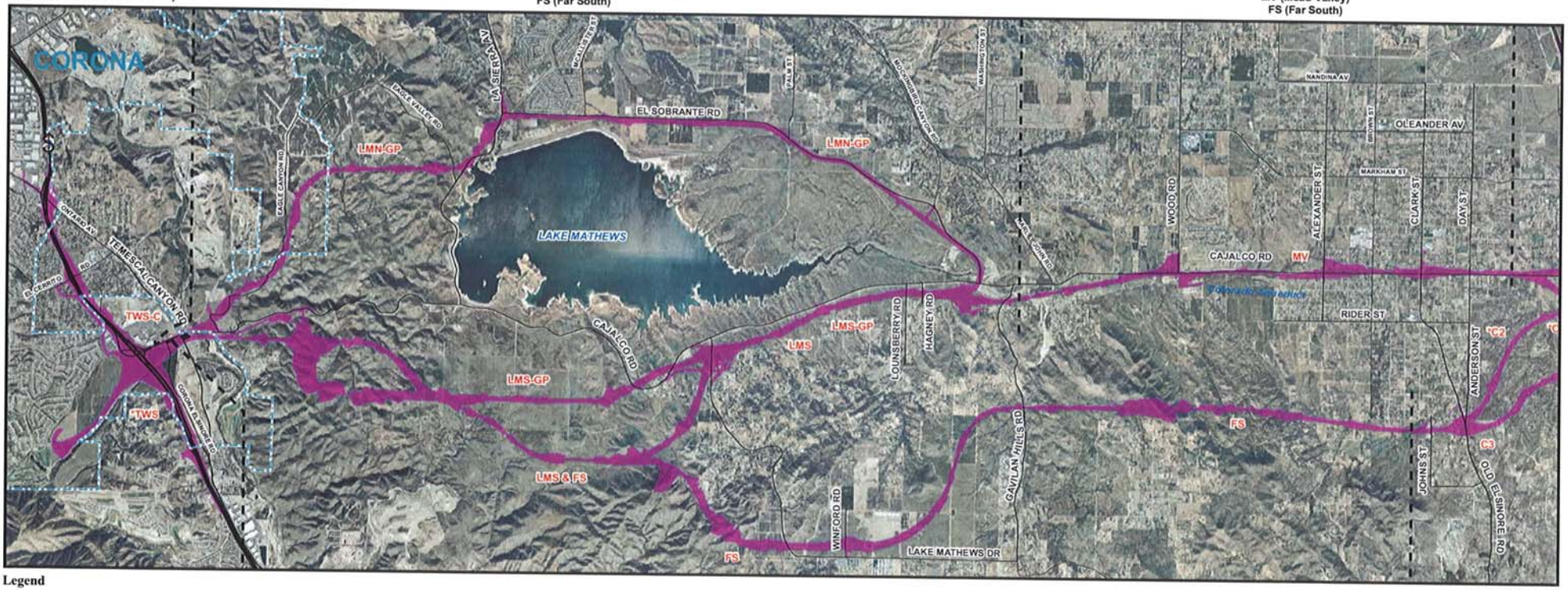
----- SEGMENTS -----
TWS-C (Temescal Wash Area with Collector Distributor)
*TWS (Temescal Wash Area with 1/2 Diamond at El Cerrito)

Lake Mathews Area

----- SEGMENTS -----
LMS (Lake Mathews South)
LMN-GP (Lake Mathews North General Plan)
LMS-GP (Lake Mathews South General Plan)
FS (Far South)

Mead Valley Far South Area

----- SEGMENTS -----
MV (Mead Valley)
FS (Far South)



Legend

- City Limits
- Alternative Segment
- Alternative Alignment

FIGURE A-1a

SOURCE: Airphoto USA (2006), TBM (2006), Jacobs Engineering (02/2007)

0 0.805 1.61 3.22 Kilometers

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

E:\JCV531\GIS_Final\NOP\mcp_segments_ROW_S1_061407.mxd (8/15/2007)

Study Area Segments

KP 0.0/51.0 (PM 0.0/31.7) EA 08-0F3200

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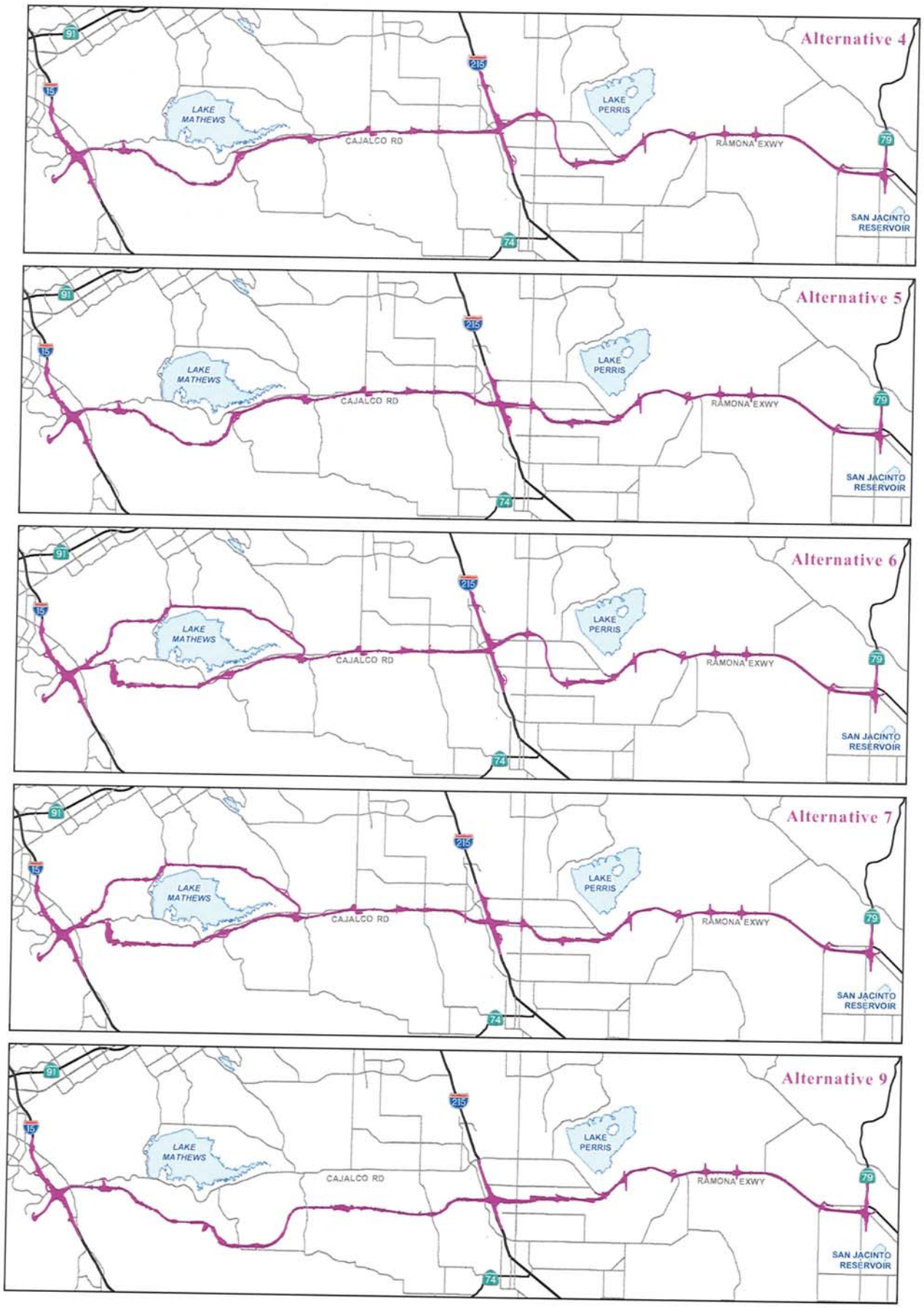

SOURCE: TBM (2006), Jacobs Engineering (02/2007).

0 2.62 5.24 10.48 Kilometers

0 1.625 3.25 6.5 Miles

Alternatives 4,5,6,7 and 9

KP 0.0/51.0 (PM 0.0/31.7) EA 08-0F3200

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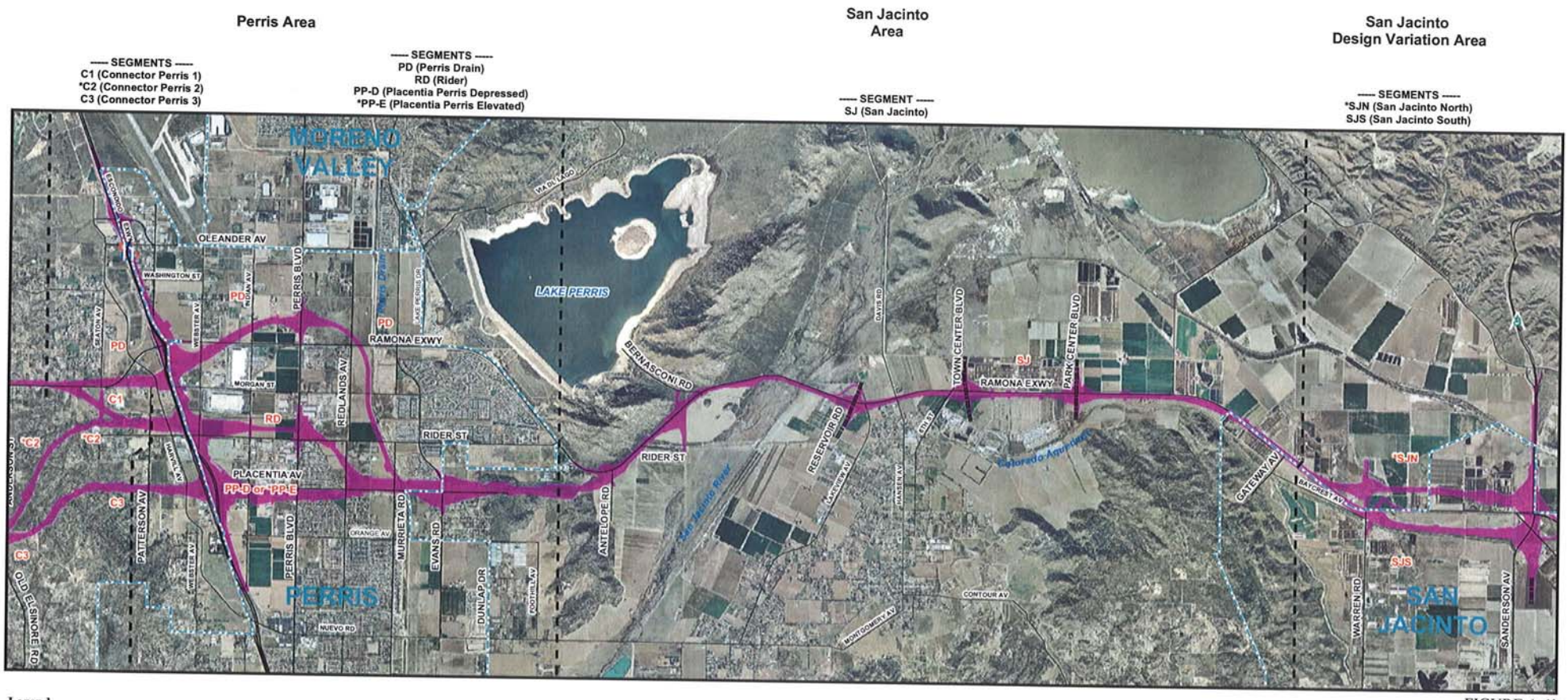

Legend

- Alternative Segment
- Alternative Alignment
- Planned Roads

SOURCE: Airphoto USA (2006), TBM (2006), Jacobs Engineering (02/2007)

0 0.805 1.61 3.22 Kilometers

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

I:\JCV531\GIS_Final\NOP\mcp_segments_ROW_S2_061407.mxd (8/15/2007)

FIGURE A-1b

Study Area Segments

KP 0.0/51.0 (PM 0.0/31.7) EA 08-0F3200

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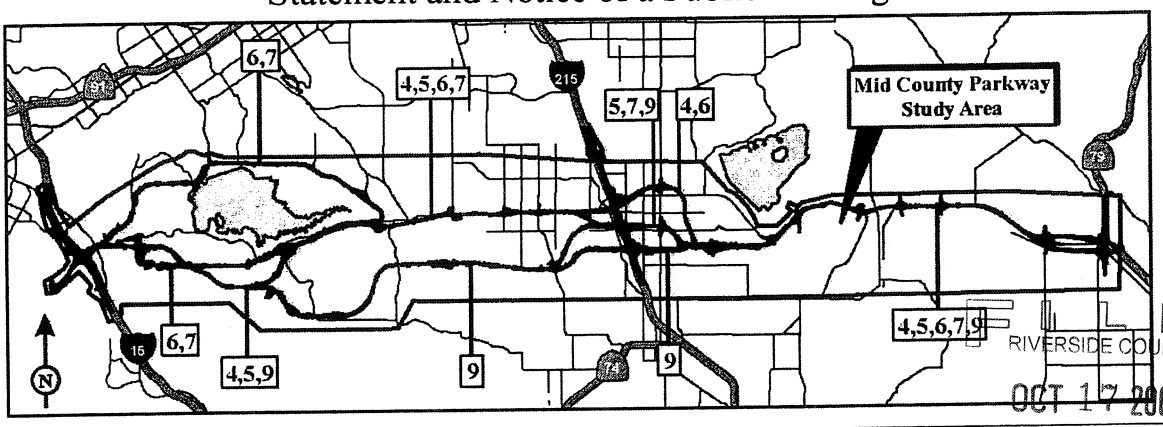
MID COUNTY PARKWAY PROJECT

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement and Notice of a Public Hearing



WHAT IS BEING PLANNED?

The Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) are proposing a project to improve west-east transportation in western Riverside County between Interstate 15 (I-15) in the west and State Route 79 (SR-79) in the east. The proposed project will construct a new parkway, known as the Mid County Parkway (MCP), which will provide a direct and continuous route connecting major population/employment centers in the cities of Corona, Perris, and San Jacinto, a distance of approximately 51 kilometers (km) (32 miles [mi]). The project alternatives consist of five Build Alternatives (4, 5, 6, 7 and 9) and two No Build Alternatives (1A and 1B).

WHY THIS NOTICE?

The Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS), that was prepared pursuant to federal and State environmental laws, examines the potential environmental impacts of the alternatives being considered for the proposed MCP project. The document describes why the project is being proposed, the project alternatives, the existing environment that could be affected by the project, the potential environmental impacts of each of the proposed alternatives, and the proposed avoidance, minimization and/or mitigation measures. The proposed work involves sites on a list enumerated under Section 65962.5 of the Government Code pertaining to hazardous wastes. The proposed project will encroach upon wetlands and floodplains. The project is being evaluated to determine if there are any practical alternatives to avoid these encroachments or, if not, to ensure that all practical measures are taken to minimize harm to wetlands and floodplains. One or more of the alternatives being evaluated will have an effect on historic properties eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. RCTC, FHWA, and Caltrans have evaluated whether adequate mitigation measures can be incorporated into the project plans.

WHAT IS AVAILABLE?

The RCTC is hosting public informational meetings to provide the community with information about the Draft EIR/EIS. The public informational meetings will be held on October 28, 29, & 30, 2008 at the following locations, respectively: Eagle Glen Golf Course, 1800 Eagle Glen Parkway, Corona CA 92883; Perris Senior Center, 100 North D Street, Perris, CA 92570; and Valley Wide Recreation and Park District – Sport Center Meeting Room, 901 West Esplanade Avenue, San Jacinto, CA 92581. At these "open house" style meetings, you may attend anytime between 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. to view informational displays and the Draft EIR/EIS. The MCP project team will be available to discuss your questions, comments, and suggestions, one-on-one, regarding the proposed project.

In addition, the RCTC is holding two formal public hearings to accept public comments. These public hearings will be held on November 6, 2008 at 6 p.m. at the Perris City Council Chambers, 101 North D Street, Perris CA 92570 and November 12, 2008 at 9:30 a.m. at the RCTC – Board Room, 4080 Lemon Street - Main Floor, Riverside, CA 92501.

The Draft EIR/EIS and technical studies are available for viewing at the following locations during regular business hours: 1) RCTC, 4080 Lemon Street - 3rd Floor, Riverside, CA 92502; 2) FHWA, 650 Capitol Mall, Suite 4-100, Sacramento, CA 95814; 3) Caltrans District 8 Office – 6th Floor, 464 W. 4th St, San Bernardino, CA 92401; 4) City of Corona – Public Works Department, 400 South Vicentia Avenue, 2nd Floor - Suite 210, Corona, CA 92882; 5) Corona Public Library, 650 S. Main St, Corona, CA 92882; 6) Perris Public Library, 163 E. San Jacinto Ave, Perris, CA 92507; 7) San Jacinto Public Library, 500 Idyllwild Dr., San Jacinto, CA 92583; 8) Woodcrest Library, 16625 Krameria, Riverside, CA 92504; and, 9) Hemet Library, 300 E. Latham Avenue, Hemet, CA 92543. You may also view and comment on the Draft EIR/EIS at www.midcountyparkway.org.

WHERE YOU COME IN

The Draft EIR/EIS is available for public review and comment between October 10, 2008 and December 8, 2008. The purpose of the public review and comment period is to give interested parties the opportunity to provide their input on the proposed project and the environmental analysis for the project. Comments may be submitted in person at any of the public meetings/hearings, via email at www.midcountyparkway.org, or mailed to either of the following addresses: Ms. Cathy Bechtel, RCTC, 4080 Lemon Street - 3rd Floor, Riverside, CA 92501 and/or Mr. Tay Dam, FHWA, 650 Capitol Mall, Suite 4-100, Sacramento, CA 95814. All comments must be received no later than December 8, 2008.

CONTACT/SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

For individuals with sensory disabilities please contact Ms. Cathy Bechtel at the RCTC to discuss availability of the Draft EIR/EIS in alternate formats: phone: (951) 787-7141 or fax: (951) 787-7920 before December 8, 2008.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[Public Notice 6390]

Shipping Coordinating Committee; Notice of Subcommittee Meeting

The Shipping Coordinating Committee (SHC), through its Subcommittee on the Safety of Life at Sea, will conduct an open meeting at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, November 4, 2008, in Room 2415 of the United States Coast Guard Headquarters Building, 2100 Second Street, SW., Washington, DC 20593–0001. The primary purpose of the meeting is to prepare for the eighty-fifth Session of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Marine Safety Committee (MSC) to be held at IMO headquarters in London, United Kingdom, from November 26 to December 5, 2008. The primary matters to be considered include:

—Adoption of the agenda
—Decisions of other IMO bodies
—Consideration and adoption of amendments to mandatory instruments
—Measures to enhance maritime security
—Goal-based new ship construction standards
—Long range identification and tracking (LRIT) related matters
—Technical assistance sub-programme in maritime safety and security
—Capacity-building for the implementation of new measures
—Role of the human element
—Formal safety assessment
—Piracy and armed robbery against ships
—General cargo ship safety
—Reports of six subcommittees—Ship design and equipment, Training and Watchkeeping, Radiocommunications and Search and Rescue, Flag State Implementation, Safety of Navigation, Stability, Load Lines and Fishing Vessel Safety, Dangerous Goods, Solid Cargoes and Containers
—Relations with other organizations
—Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman for 2009

Members of the public may attend this meeting up to the seating capacity of the room. Persons planning to attend this meeting should contact the meeting coordinator, LCDR Jason Smith, not later than 72 hours before the meeting by e-mail at *jason.e.smith2@uscg.mil*, by phone at (202) 372–1372, by fax at (202) 372–1925, or in writing at Commandant (CG–5212), U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, 2100 2nd Street, SW., Room 1308, Washington, DC 20593–0001.

The U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters building is accessible by taxi and privately owned conveyance (public transportation is not generally available). Please note, however, that parking in the vicinity of the building is extremely limited. Please also note that due to security considerations, two valid, government issued photo identifications must be presented to gain entrance to the Coast Guard Headquarters building. If you have any questions about this SHC subcommittee meeting, please contact LCDR Jason Smith at the numbers or addresses listed above.

Dated: October 3, 2008.

Mark Skolnicki,

Executive Secretary, Shipping Coordinating Committee, Department of State.

[FR Doc. E8–24336 Filed 10–10–08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4710–09–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration

Notice of Availability of the Mid County Parkway Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement

DATE: October 2008.

AGENCY: United States Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration.

ACTION: Notice of Availability (NOA) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS).

SUMMARY: The Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) announce the availability of the Mid County Parkway (MCP) Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) that evaluates the environmental effects of the proposed MCP project. The MCP project will construct a new west-east parkway between Interstate 15 (I–15) on the west and State Route 79 (SR–79) on the east which will provide a direct and continuous route connecting existing and planned major population/employment centers in the County of Riverside and the cities of Corona, Perris, and San Jacinto, a distance of approximately 51 kilometers (km) (32 miles [mi]). The project alternatives consist of five Build Alternatives (4, 5, 6, 7 and 9) and two No Build Alternatives (1A and 1B).

DATES: The comment period for the MCP Draft EIR/EIS will end 60 days after publication of the NOA in the **Federal Register**. The RCTC is hosting public informational meetings to provide the public with information about the Draft EIR/EIS. The public informational meetings will be held on October 28, 29, & 30, 2008 at the following locations, respectively: Eagle Glen Golf Course, 1800 Eagle Glen Parkway, Corona CA 92883; Perris Senior Center, 100 North D Street, Perris, CA 92570; and Valley Wide Recreation and Park District—Sport Center Meeting Room, 901 West Esplanade Avenue, San Jacinto, CA 92581. At these ''open house'' style meetings, you may attend anytime between 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. to view informational displays and the Draft EIR/EIS. The MCP project team will be available to discuss your questions, comments, and suggestions, one-on-one, regarding the proposed project.

In addition, the RCTC is holding two formal public hearings to accept public comments. These public hearings will be held on November 6, 2008 at 6 p.m. at the Perris City Council Chambers, 101 North D Street, Perris CA 92570 and November 12, 2008 at 9:30 a.m. at the RCTC—Board Room, 4080 Lemon Street, Main Floor, Riverside, CA 92501.

Contact/Address: Comments on the MCP Draft EIR/EIS can be mailed to the following addresses: Ms. Cathy Bechtel at RCTC, 4080 Lemon Street, 3rd Floor, Riverside, CA 92502 and/or Mr. Tay Dam, FHWA, 650 Capitol Mall, Suite 4–100, Sacramento, CA 95814, or via e-mail at: *midcountyparkway.org.*

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Cathy Bechtel at RCTC: (951) 787–7141, or Mr. Tay Dam at FHWA: (213) 605–2013.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The MCP Draft EIR/EIS evaluates the environmental and socioeconomic effects of constructing and implementing the proposed MCP project. The purpose of the proposed MCP project is to provide a transportation parkway that would effectively and efficiently accommodate regional west-east movement of people and goods between and through Corona, Perris, and San Jacinto. The proposed MCP project is subject to federal, as well as local and State, environmental review requirements because the RCTC proposes the use of federal funds from the FHWA and/or the project requires a FHWA approval action. Project documentation, therefore, has been prepared in compliance with both the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The RCTC is the project proponent and the lead agency under CEQA. Because of

FHWA funding and/or approval, FHWA is lead agency under NEPA, with the Caltrans acting as its liaison and providing oversight for the NEPA process. Some potential project impacts determined to be significant under CEQA may not be considered significant under NEPA.

After comments are received from the public and reviewing agencies, the RCTC and the FHWA may undertake additional environmental and/or engineering studies. A Final EIR/EIS will include responses to comments received on the Draft EIR/EIS. Following preparation of the Final EIR/EIS, if the decision is made to approve the project, a Notice of Determination will be published for compliance with CEQA and a Record of Decision will be published for compliance with NEPA.

The MCP Alternatives evaluated in the Draft EIR/EIS include five Build Alternatives (4, 5, 6, 7 and 9) and two No Build Alternatives (1A and 1B). At its regular meeting of September 12, 2007, the RCTC Board approved identification of Alternative 9 with the Temescal Wash Design Variation (TWS DV) as the locally preferred alternative for the MCP project. However, the final selection of an alternative will not be made until after the consideration of public comments on the Draft EIR/EIS, and before approval of the Final EIR/EIS.

Alternative 1A represents 2035 traffic on the planned street network except for future improvements to Cajalco Road and Ramona Expressway, which would remain as they exist today. Construction of the MCP project would not be implemented with the No Project/No Action Alternative 1A. The future west-east traffic described in the study area would be served by the existing Cajalco Road and El Sobrante Road between I–15 and Interstate 215 (I–215) and by the existing Ramona Expressway between I–215 and SR–79. This alternative assumes 2035 land use conditions and implementation of planned improvements to the regional and local circulation system as accounted for in the adopted Riverside County General Plan (2003), RCTC's Measure A program, and other adopted plans and policies.

Alternative 1B represents 2035 traffic levels on the planned street network, according to the Circulation Element of the Riverside County General Plan. Construction of the MCP project would not be implemented with No Project/No Action Alternative 1B. This alternative is the same as Alternative 1A but includes the implementation of Cajalco Road and Ramona Expressway improvements consistent with the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element.

Alternative 4 is a six-to eight-lane limited access parkway alternative. Alternative 4 is located south of Lake Mathews and follows a northerly alignment through Perris. This alternative would be located south of the existing Cajalco Road west of Lake Mathews Drive and located north of Ramona Expressway from I–215 to the Perris Drain, from where it follows the Perris Drain on an elevated structure southerly to Placentia Avenue. From that point, Alternative 4 continues east through the McCanna Hills, where it follows Ramona Expressway. Alternative 4 would connect to system-to-system interchanges at I–15, I–215, and SR–79.

Alternative 5 is a six-to eight-lane limited access parkway alternative. Alternative 5 is located south of Lake Mathews and follows a southerly alignment through Perris. This alternative is located south of the existing Cajalco Road west of Lake Mathews Drive and is located south of Ramona Expressway from I–215 (following Rider Street and Placentia Avenue) to just west of Antelope Road. From that point, Alternative 5 continues east where it follows Ramona Expressway. Alternative 5 would connect to system-to-system interchanges at I–15, I–215, and SR–79.

Alternative 6 involves the implementation of arterial improvements included in the Riverside County General Plan west of El Sobrante, including a six-lane arterial north of Lake Mathews and a four-lane limited access expressway south of Lake Mathews. East of El Sobrante, this alternative is the same as Alternative 4 described above, providing a new six-to eight-lane limited access parkway. The proposed arterial street improvements north and south of Lake Mathews are consistent with the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element and generally follow the alignments shown in the General Plan.

Alternative 7 involves the implementation of arterial improvements included in the Riverside County General Plan west of El Sobrante, including a six-lane arterial north of Lake Mathews, a four-lane limited-access expressway south of Lake Mathews. East of El Sobrante, this alternative is the same as Alternative 5 described above, providing a new six-to eight-lane limited access parkway. The proposed arterial street improvements north and south of Lake Mathews are consistent with the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element and generally follow the alignments shown in the General Plan.

Alternative 9 is a four-to six-lane controlled access parkway between I–15 and Old Elsinore Road, south of Lake Mathews and Mead Valley. The alternative is aligned south of Metropolitan Habitat Conservation Plan Reserve lands and traverses the Gavilan Hills area. From Old Elsinore Road to the I–215 interchange, Alternative 9 is a six-to eight-lane controlled access parkway. East of I–215, Alternative 9 follows Placentia Avenue; east of Evans Road, it follows a common alignment with Alternatives 4–7 through McCanna Hills and along Ramona Expressway. Alternative 9 is a six-to eight-lane controlled-access parkway between I–215 and SR–79. Alternative 9 would connect to system-to-system interchanges at I–15, I–215, and SR–79.

The Draft EIR/EIS and technical studies are available for viewing at the following locations during regular business hours: (1) RCTC, 4080 Lemon Street, 3rd Floor, Riverside, CA 92502; (2) FHWA, 650 Capitol Mall, Suite 4–100, Sacramento, CA 95814; (3) Caltrans District 8 Office —6th Floor, 464 W. 4th St., San Bernardino, CA 92401; (4) City of Corona—Public Works Department, 400 South Vicentia Avenue, 2nd Floor, Suite 210, Corona, CA 92882; (5) Corona Public Library, 650 S. Main St., Corona, CA 92882; (6) Perris Public Library, 163 E. San Jacinto Ave., Perris, CA 92507; (7) San Jacinto Public Library, 500 Idyllwild Dr., San Jacinto, CA 92583; (8) Woodcrest Library, 16625 Krameria, Riverside, CA 92504; and (9) Hemet Library, 300 E. Latham Avenue, Hemet, CA 92543. You may also view and comment on the Draft EIR/EIS at *http://www.midcountyparkway.org.*

Issued on: October 2, 2008.

Nancy E. Bobb,

Director of State Programs, Major Projects Program Manager, Federal Highway Administration, 650 Capitol Mall, Suite 4–100, Sacramento, CA 95814.

[FR Doc. E8–23805 Filed 10–10–08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration

Environmental Impact Statement: San Diego, CA

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

ACTION: Notice of Intent.

SUMMARY: FHWA is issuing this notice to advise the public that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

PUBLIC NOTICE

US Army Corps of Engineers®

APPLICATION FOR PERMIT

LOS ANGELES DISTRICT

Public Notice/Application No.: 2001-00537
Comment Period: October 31, 2008 through December 8, 2008
Project Manager: Susan A. Meyer susan.a.meyer@usace.army.mil

Applicant
Cathy Bechtel
Project Development Director
Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC)
4080 Lemon Street, 3rd Floor
Riverside, California 92502-2208

Contact
Cathy Bechtel
Project Development Director
RCTC
(951) 787-7141
cbechtel@rctc.org

Location: The proposed activity is located in western Riverside County, California. The biological study area encompasses approximately 17,000 acres (ac) within the Santa Ana River and San Jacinto River watersheds and is roughly bounded by Interstate 15 (I-15) to the west, the Cities of Riverside and Moreno Valley to the north, State Route 79 (SR-79) to the east, and State Route 74 (SR-74) to the south (Figure 1).

Activity: To construct roadway improvements. These improvements may consist of a transportation parkway approximately 30 miles (mi) in length, connecting the existing I-15 in Corona to SR-79 in San Jacinto, with an intermediate point at Interstate 215 (I-215) in Perris. Five alternative alignments are under consideration and are depicted in Figure 2. While a federally preferred alternative has not been identified at this time, the applicant has identified a locally preferred alternative, namely Alternative 9. Additional information concerning the description of the proposed project alternatives, including Alternative 9 and the environmental impacts, is found on the following pages of this PN and contained in the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS). The Draft EIR/EIS and its appendices and technical reports are available on the Internet at midcountyparkway.org. The Draft EIR/EIS and technical reports are also available for

review at the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and various public libraries in the activity area.

Interested parties are hereby notified that an application has been received for a Department of the Army permit for the activity described herein and shown on the attached drawing(s). Interested parties are invited to provide their views on the proposed work, which will become a part of the record and will be considered in the decision. This permit will be issued or denied under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act of 1972 (33 U.S.C. 1344) (CWA).

Comments should be mailed to:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Regulatory Division
ATTN: Susan A. Meyer
Bldg. 230
Ft. Shafter, Hawaii 96858-5440

Alternatively, comments can be sent electronically to: susan.a.meyer@usace.army.mil.

Evaluation Factors

The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable environmental effects, including cumulative environmental effects of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit, which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal, must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors that may be relevant to the proposal will be considered, including the cumulative effects thereof. Factors that will be considered include conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural values, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food production, and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people. In addition, if the proposal would discharge dredged or fill material into waters of the United States (WofUS), evaluation of the activity will include application of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Guidelines as required by Section 404 (b)(1) of the CWA (40 CFR 230).

The United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) is soliciting comments from the public; federal, State, and local agencies and officials; Indian tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed project. Comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the applicant, RCTC, are preparing a joint California Environmental Quality Act/National Environmental Policy Act (CEQA/NEPA) document that evaluates the environmental effects of the proposed transportation project. Comments received on this Public Notice (PN) will be used in the identification of a federally preferred alternative/preliminary least environmentally damaging practicable alternative (LEDPA) and

in the finalization of the EIS pursuant to NEPA. Comments also will be used to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity. Commensurate with the circulation of the Final EIR/EIS for this proposed project, a subsequent PN will be issued by the Corps to solicit comments on the applicant's and FHWA's final selection of a locally and federally preferred alternative, respectively. Any comments received on the subsequent PN will be considered by the Corps to determine the need for a public hearing and whether to issue, modify, condition, or deny a permit for the discharge of dredged or fill material into WofUS resulting from the proposed activity.

Preliminary Review of Selected Factors

EIS Determination: A joint Draft EIR/EIS has been prepared by the FHWA and the applicant, RCTC, entitled *Mid County Parkway Project* (MCP). The Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS was published in the Federal Register on November 22, 2004. Two No Action Alternatives plus five Build Alternatives are being considered, including three parkway alternatives and two parkway/General Plan arterial alternatives. The public Draft EIR/EIS is currently available for a 60-day public review period, beginning on October 10, 2008, and closing on December 8, 2008. A copy of the Notice of Availability (NOA) of the Draft EIR/EIS was filed in the Federal Register on October 10, 2008 [FR Doc. 2008–23805 and published October 14, 2008].

Water Quality: The applicant is required to obtain water quality certification, under Section 401 of the CWA, from the California Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). Section 401 requires that any applicant for an individual Section 404 permit provide proof of water quality certification to the Corps prior to permit issuance. For any proposed activity on Tribal land that is subject to Section 404 jurisdiction, the applicant will be required to obtain water quality certification from the EPA. Upon selection of a preferred alternative, the applicant plans to submit an application to the RWQCB seeking 401 certification.

Coastal Zone Management: The proposed activity is not located within the coastal zone.

Cultural and Paleontological Resources: The most current version of the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) and other applicable sources have been reviewed to determine whether any cultural resource sites exist in the project area. Several sites with potential resource significance have been identified on or adjacent to the various alternatives. Accordingly, the FHWA, as the lead federal agency, is in the process of conducting all necessary coordination with the State Historic Preservation Officer in accordance with 36 CFR Section 800. FHWA has consulted with affected Native American tribes and continues to coordinate with them on an ongoing basis with regards to determinations of site eligibility and finding of effect. Adverse effects to cultural resources are anticipated and a Memorandum of Agreement will likely be required. Implementation of the MCP build alternatives may affect fossil-bearing formations, resulting in potential damage or loss of resources. Mitigation measures have been established and would be implemented to mitigate such impacts. However, unavoidable adverse impacts related to

paleontological resources would likely remain after mitigation. Once a federally preferred alternative is selected, the FHWA will complete the coordination process with SHPO in compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act.

Endangered Species: Preliminary determinations indicate that the proposed activity may affect 11 federally listed endangered and threatened plant and animal species and potentially modify federally designated or proposed critical habitat for three species. Listed species that may be affected are: San Jacinto Valley crownscale *(Atriplex coronata* var. *notatior),* Spreading navarretia *(Navarretia fossalis),* Munz's onion *(Allium munzii),* coastal California gnatcatcher *(Polioptila californica californica),* least Bell's vireo *(Vireo bellii pusillus),* Arroyo toad *(Bufo californicus),* Swainson's hawk *(Buteo swainsoni),* Quino checkerspot butterfly *(Euphydryas editha quino),* Southwestern willow flycatcher *(Empidonax traillii extimus),* San Bernardino Merriam's kangaroo rat *(Dipodomys merriami parvus),* and Stephens' kangaroo rat *(Dipodomys stephensi).* Additionally, designated critical habitat or proposed critical habitat for the coastal California gnatcatcher, Quino checkerspot butterfly, and San Bernardino Merriam's kangaroo rat may be affected or adversely modified. The FHWA will initiate consultation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) under Section 7 of the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) for the above-listed species and designated critical habitat when a federally preferred alternative is selected. This consultation will be conducted pursuant to the provisions of the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP). Refer to Section 3.21 (Affected Environment, Environmental Consequences, and Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures to Threatened and Endangered Species) in the Draft EIR/EIS for detailed descriptions of the impacts on federally listed species and designated critical habitat. The expected direct impacts on the aforementioned species are summarized below.

- All MCP Build Alternatives would directly impact 0.77 ac of area suitable for long-term conservation value for spreading navarretia.

- Alternatives 4, 5, and 9 would result in 7.58 ac of direct impacts to areas inferred to be occupied by Munz's onion pending completion of survey reports in late 2008. Alternatives 6 and 7 would result in 0.02 ac of direct impacts to areas inferred to be occupied by Munz's onion.

- Alternatives 6 and 7 do not impact Final Critical Habitat for the coastal California gnatcatcher Alternatives 4 and 5 would result in 33.5 ac of impacts to Final Critical Habitat for the coastal California gnatcatcher, and Alternative 9 results in 40.1 ac of impacts.

- All MCP Build Alternatives will impact 2.9 ac of critical habitat for the San Bernardino kangaroo rat. The MCP project will not result in any impact to the 2007 proposed critical habitat for the San Bernardino kangaroo rat. In addition, within the MSHCP survey area for this species, the MCP project will directly impact 1.0 ac of San Bernardino kangaroo rat occupied habitat suitable for long-term conservation under all of the alternatives and design variations, except the San Jacinto North design variation, which will impact 0.8 ac.

- According to the MSHCP, the Quino checkerspot butterfly is determined to be extirpated from the Lake Mathews area; thus, direct impacts to this species are not anticipated. However, impacts to final designated Quino checkerspot butterfly critical habitat would consist of between 140.0 ac for Alternatives 6 and 7 and 327.6 ac for Alternative 9.

- Alternatives 4 through 7 would each impact five nesting pairs/individual least Bell's vireo and Alternative 9 would impact two nesting least Bell's vireo pairs. Alternative 9 impacts the least amount of least Bell's vireo habitat, 2.2 ac suitable for long-term conservation, compared to 8.5 ac for Alternatives 6 and 7.

- Impacts to the Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Reserve would range between 168.7 ac and 540.3 ac by impacting portions of the Lake Mathews MSHCP Plan Area and Lake Mathews-Estelle Mountain Reserve.

Essential Fish Habitat: This project is not expected to impact any areas designated as Essential Fish Habitat by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries).

Public Meetings: As the lead federal agency under NEPA, the FHWA, in conjunction with RCTC, plans to hold public information meetings on the proposed project on October 28, 2008; October 29, 2008; and, October 30, 2008, Corona, Perris, and San Jacinto, respectively, from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. At these open house-style meetings, the public may attend to view information displays and the Draft EIR/EIS. The MCP project team will be available to discuss questions, comments, and suggestions from the public regarding the proposed project. Public hearings will also be held on the proposed project to accept public comments on November 6, 2008, beginning at 6:00 p.m. at the Perris City Council Chambers and on November 12, 2008, beginning at 9:30 a.m. at RCTC Board Room.

Proposed Activity for Which a Permit is Required

The proposed build alternatives that are under consideration would result in varying amounts of discharge of fill material into WofUS, including wetlands. Table 1 estimates the direct and permanent losses of WofUS, expressed in acres, for each of the build alternatives. In general, the build alternatives include multiple bridge structures. These bridges are proposed to be constructed at major water crossings and natural resources where the transportation facility/corridor alignment crosses the following drainages: Temescal Wash, Cajalco Creek, Perris Valley Storm Drain, and the San Jacinto River (two crossings). The bridge structures would be designed to minimize impacts to aquatic resources by spanning, where possible, and minimizing the use of fill material for abutments, pilings, and adjacent bank stabilization.

In addition to the discharge of fill material associated with the bridges, cut-and-fill construction activities are expected to permanently impact a number of unnamed ephemeral and intermittent drainages, including adjacent wetlands. Depending on the alternative, the total volume of fill material ranges from approximately 16.5 million cubic meters to 19.2 cubic meters. In terms of the placement of the total volume of fill material associated with each alternative, a portion would be discharged into areas that likely are not under the Corps

geographic jurisdiction (e.g., uplands), while the balance of the estimated fill material would be discharged into WofUs that would be subject to Corps jurisdiction. While the applicant has not calculated the exact quantity of fill material that would be discharged into WofUS, Table 1 provides an estimate of the impacts (expressed in acres) based on the footprint of direct disturbance to WofUS for each proposed build alternative as a result of the discharge of dredged or fill material.

Table 1 Permanent Impacts to USACE Jurisdictional Areas

Alternative/DV	Permanent Impacts, hectares/acres		
	Wetlands	Nonwetlands	Corps Total
Alt. 4 Base Case	1.8 (4.5)	4.2 (10.5)	6.0 (14.9)
Alt. 4 SJN DV	2.6 (6.3)	4.1 (10.1)	6.6 (16.4)
Alt. 4 TWS DV	1.8 (4.5)	4.1 (10.1)	5.9 (14.5)
Alt. 5 Base Case	1.7 (4.3)	4.2 (10.5)	6.0 (14.8)
Alt. 5 SJN DV	2.5 (6.2)	4.1 (10.0)	6.6 (16.2)
Alt. 5 TWS DV	1.7 (4.3)	4.1 (10.1)	5.8 (14.4)
Alt. 6 Base Case	2.2 (5.4)	4.7 (11.7)	6.9 (17.2)
Alt. 6 SJN DV	3.0 (7.3)	4.6 (11.3)	7.5 (18.6)
Alt. 6 TWS DV	2.2 (5.4)	4.6 (11.3)	6.8 (16.8)
Alt. 7 Base Case	2.1 (5.3)	4.7 (11.7)	6.9 (17.0)
Alt. 7 SJN DV	2.9 (7.2)	4.6 (11.3)	7.5 (18.5)
Alt. 7 TWS DV	2.1 (5.3)	4.6 (11.3)	6.7 (16.6)
Alt. 9 Base Case	0.7 (1.7)	3.6 (8.8)	4.2 (10.5)
Alt. 9 RD DV	0.3 (0.8)	2.7 (6.7)	3.0 (7.5)
Alt. 9 PP-E DV	0.7 (1.7)	3.6 (8.8)	4.2 (10.5)
Alt. 9 SJN DV	1.4 (3.5)	3.4 (8.4)	4.8 (11.9)
Alt. 9 TWS DV	0.7 (1.7)	3.4 (8.4)	4.1 (10.1)

Source: *Natural Environment Study*, LSA Associates, Inc. 2008.

Alt = Alternative
DV = Design Variation
PP-E = Placentia Avenue/Perris Boulevard Elevated Grade
RD = Rider Street
SJN = San Jacinto North
TWS = Temescal Wash Area
Corps = United States Army Corps of Engineers

Indirect effects on the hydrologic integrity of riparian ecosystems resulting from the discharge of dredged or fill material into WofUS have been assessed in the Hydrology and Location Hydraulics technical studies. Similarly, indirect or secondary effects on the water quality integrity of riparian ecosystems that would result from the discharge of dredged or fill material into WofUS have been quantitatively evaluated in the Water Quality Assessment (WQA) technical study. The WQA stipulates that the designated water quality volume of runoff generated from the project facility would be treated at appropriate water quality remediation facilities prior to discharge into downstream receiving waters. Treatment would be provided at or above Maximum Extent Practicable (MEP) levels and would not exceed the

applicable RWQCB Water Quality Control Plans for the San Diego and Santa Ana regions. In addition, the project incorporates a number of Best Management Practices (BMPs) to control runoff velocities and treat water runoff. There could be potential indirect or secondary effects on the habitat integrity of riparian ecosystems resulting from the discharge of dredged or fill material into WofUS. During the remainder of the MCP environmental and permit review processes, the Corps will work with the applicant and FHWA to refine the potential indirect or secondary effects on the habitat integrity, water quality integrity, and hydrology integrity of riparian ecosystems resulting from the discharge of dredged or fill material into WofUS. Any additional or new information that results from this refinement process would be quantified and disclosed in the Final EIR/EIS and in the Corps' subsequent PN.

The applicant has received a formal jurisdictional determination from the Corps for purposes of the Section 404 permit review process and in accordance with the 1994 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) procedures. The jurisdictional limit for non-tidal WofUS was determined by the jurisdictional wetland boundary and/or the ordinary high water mark. The jurisdictional limit of wetlands was determined in accordance the Corps 1987 Wetlands Delineation Manual (Environmental Laboratory 1987). Otherwise, presence of the indicators stated in the definition of ordinary high water mark (33 CFR 328.3(e)) was used to establish the jurisdictional limit of a WofUS. The estimates of acreage impacts shown in Table 1 are based on the formal jurisdictional determination, which was approved and verified by the Corps on April 10, 2008.

The functions, or integrity, of the identified WofUS and riparian ecosystems in each MCP project alternative were further assessed at a watershed level using a suite of hydrologic, water quality, and habitat integrity indicators identified in the report titled *Potential Impacts of Alternative Corridor Alignments to Waters of the United States, Riparian Ecosystems, and Threatened and Endangered Species: Mid County Parkway Project, Riverside County, California* (ERDC 2008).

Riparian ecosystem integrity was assessed by first identifying "riparian reach" assessment units and then assessing each riparian reach using a suite of hydrologic, water quality, and habitat integrity indicators (Smith 2003, 2006). A riparian reach was defined as a segment of the main stem, bankfull stream channel and the adjacent riparian ecosystem exhibiting relatively homogenous characteristics with respect to geology, geomorphology, channel morphology, substrate type, vegetation communities, and cultural alteration. The boundaries of the aquatic resources study area included not only the riparian reaches that are in the direct impact area of the build alternatives, but also include (for indirect and cumulative effects) the local drainage and drainage basin of each riparian reach.

Fifteen assessment criteria were used to evaluate the impacts of each alternative to WofUS and riparian ecosystems. These indicators represent the physical, chemical, and biological characteristics and processes of riparian ecosystems at three spatial levels: (1) the riparian reach proper, (2) uplands adjacent to the riparian reach, and (3) the drainage basin of the riparian reach. Multi-indicators related to land use/land cover, vegetation communities, hydrology, sediment, and disturbance factors were used. Indicator metrics were measured in

the field using ground data collection methods supplemented with aerial photography. Indicator metrics were scaled to a culturally unaltered "reference condition," and selected indicators were then combined into hydrology, water quality, and habitat integrity indices for each riparian reach.

The functional (integrity) assessment was applied to these indicators in order to qualitatively and quantitatively assess and compare potential direct and indirect impacts of the build alternatives of the proposed MCP project on WofUS and riparian ecosystems. The quantity of riparian ecosystem in a riparian reach is represented by the extent (i.e., acres or miles) of riparian ecosystem in a riparian reach. A qualitative assessment was conducted using integrity indices for hydrologic, water quality, and habitat of a riparian reach. Integrity units are calculated by multiplying the hydrologic, water quality, and habitat integrity indices of a riparian reach by the acres of riparian ecosystem in a riparian reach. This provides an integrated measure of riparian ecosystem quality and quantity in a riparian reach.

Direct and indirect impacts of the MCP build alternatives were assessed by simulating the changes that could be expected to occur as a result of implementation of each alternative and comparing the simulated results to baseline conditions. Normalized rank scores were calculated by dividing the potential impact (e.g., length, area, integrity units) of each alternative corridor alignment by the potential impact of the alternative corridor alignment with the greatest impact. Corridors with the lowest normalized rank scores have the least potential impact. Tables 2 and 3 summarize the results and normalized rank scores for criteria assessing potential impacts to WofUS and riparian ecosystems. These criteria include direct impacts to WofUS and riparian ecosystems within the project footprint as well as indirect impacts measured in terms of both quantity and quality of affected areas.

Overall, the impact of all the MCP build alternatives to riparian ecosystems was minimal, given the relatively large size of the permanent impact footprint associated with the project alternatives. The minimal impact reflects the strategic placement of alternative corridor alignments to avoid riparian ecosystems to the extent feasible. Under this analysis, Alternative 9 had the least impact among the MCP Build Alternatives to aquatic resources and riparian ecosystems. Alternatives 4 and 5 had the second greatest impact and Alternatives 6 and 7 had the greatest impact.

Table 2 summarizes the normalized rank scores for the 10 criteria assessing impacts to WofUS and riparian ecosystems (seven criteria assess only direct impacts, and three criteria assess both direct and indirect impacts).

In addition to the 10 criteria for aquatic resources, there are 5 additional criteria pertaining to nonaquatic resources, such as critical habitat of upland species and Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) areas. The normalized rank scores for all 15 criteria are shown in Table 2 as the sum total with a possible range of 0–15. The sum of normalized rank scores provides a general indication of the overall potential impact of each alternative corridor alignment. For example, alternative corridor alignments with values near the maximum value of 15 consistently had the greatest level of potential impact across all criteria. However, it should be noted that this aggregation of normalized rank scores assumes

equal weight for all 15 criteria, which includes biases and redundancies that result for equally weighing all 15 criteria.

Additional indirect impacts of the project on jurisdictional areas adjacent to the project footprint may result from edge effects such as exotic plant infestations, pollutants from storm water runoff from the parkway, and unauthorized recreational use. Treated storm water runoff from the parkway to riparian/riverine areas would provide additional water to maintain wetlands, nonwetland waters, and streambeds.

Table 2 Potential Direct Impacts to Waters of the United States and Riparian Ecosystems

Alt	DIRECT IMPACTS							DIRECT AND INDIRECT IMPACTS			Sum of Normalized Rank Scores[1]
	Criterion 1: Non-wetland waters stream channels	Criterion 2: Length of main stem and tributary stream channels	Criterion 3: Area of riparian ecosystems	Criterion 4: Area of aquatic resources	Criterion 7a: Change in quantity of hydrologic integrity units in riparian ecosystems	Criterion 7b: Change in quantity of water quality integrity units in riparian ecosystems	Criterion 7c: Change in quantity of habitat integrity units in riparian ecosystems	Criterion 8a: Change in quantity of hydrologic integrity units in riparian reaches	Criterion 8b: Change in quantity of water quality integrity units in riparian reaches	Criterion 8c: Change in quantity of habitat integrity units in riparian reaches	
4	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6	6.0
5	0.8	0.9	0.6	0.7	0.7	1.0	0.6	0.6	1.0	0.9	7.8
6	1.0	0.7	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	9.7
7	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.0	0.9	9.8
9	0.9	0.5	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.3	2.8

Source: *Potential Impacts of Alternative Corridor Alignments to Waters of the United States, Riparian Ecosystems, and Threatened and Endangered Species: Mid County Parkway Project, Riverside County, California*, ERDC 2008.

Note: Criteria assessing threatened, endangered, or sensitive species habitat are not included in this tabulation.

[1] Normalized Rank Score is calculated by dividing the potential impact of each alternative corridor by the potential impact of the alternative corridor alignment with the greatest impact

Alt. = Alternative

Table 3 Sum of Normalized Rank Scores of All 15 Criteria

Alternative	Sum of Normalized Rank Scores
4	9.1
5	10.8
6	14.1
7	14.1
9	6.1

Source: *Potential Impacts of Alternative Corridor Alignments to Waters of the United States, Riparian Ecosystems, and Threatened and Endangered Species: Mid County Parkway Project, Riverside County, California,* ERDC 2008**.**

Indirect impacts were expected to change several indicators related to Land Use/Land Cover at the buffer, local drainage, and drainage basin spatial scales within the local drainage or drainage basin of a riparian reach, even if the MCP build alternative did not directly impact a riparian reach. Indirect impacts to riparian ecosystems were assessed with the direct effects, as summarized in Criteria 8a–8c in Table 2.

Additional Project Information

NEPA-Section 404 of the CWA Integrated Process MOU: The subject MOU applies to surface transportation projects in California in which an EIS project is likely to require an individual Department of Army permit, impact "special aquatic sites," or impact greater than 5 ac of WofUS. The MOU was enacted in 1994 among seven federal and State agencies: FHWA, Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Corps, EPA, USFWS, United States National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), and Caltrans. (An updated MOU was enacted in 2006; however, project-level EIS activities for the MCP were initiated in 2004 under the 1994 MOU. Hence, the MCP is continuing to follow the 1994 integration procedures). The intended benefits of the NEPA-Section 404 integration process are: improved cooperation and efficiency of governmental operations at all levels, thereby better serving the public; expedited construction of necessary transportation projects, with benefits to mobility and the economy at large; enabling more transportation projects to proceed on budget and on schedule; and protection and enhancement of WofUS, which will benefit the region's aquatic ecosysten1s and the public interest. The signatory agencies have been actively engaged in a collaborative process to fulfill the procedural and substantive requirements of the MOU. As part of the formal process, the Corps and EPA, provided written concurrence on the NEPA purpose and need/404 basic and overall project purpose in January 2004 and concurrence on project alternatives to be evaluated in the Draft EIS in December 2007. The Executive Summary in the Draft EIR/EIS contains a detailed discussion of the NEPA-Section 404 integration process, the multi-agency Small Working Group, and general public and agency coordination. Chapter 5.0, Comments and Coordination of the Draft EIR/EIS, also provides information on public and agency coordination.

Basic and Overall Project Purpose. In January 2004, pursuant to the NEPA/Section 404 of the CWA Integrated Process MOU, the MCP purpose and need statement was approved by

the federal signatory agencies, except for the USFWS, which declined to formally participate due to its need at that time to focus on completion of the Western Riverside County MSHCP. The complete project purpose and need statement is provided in Section 1.0 (Purpose and Need for the Proposed Project) of the Draft EIR/EIS. The basic project purpose (for purpose of the Corps CWA Section 404(b)(1) evaluation) is vehicular transportation. The overall project purpose (also for the Corps 404(b)(1) evaluation) is *to provide a transportation parkway that will effectively and efficiently accommodate regional west-east movement of people and goods between and through Corona, Perris, and San Jacinto.* The objectives and goals of the MCP project include the following:

- Provide increased capacity to support the forecast travel demand for the 2035 design year;
- Provide a limited access parkway;
- Provide roadway geometrics to meet State highway design standards;
- Accommodate Surface Transportation Assistance Act (STAA) National Network trucks (these are larger trucks allowed on the federal Interstate system and non-Interstate federal-aid primary system); and
- Provide a parkway that is compatible with a future multimodal transportation system.

Description of Build Alternatives. Although the general description for each of the alternatives is similar, the descriptions differ in their juxtaposition within the study area and in the location of their connection with I-215 (all five build alternatives have the same connections with I-15 and SR-79). A summary description of the alternatives is provided below. Figure 2 shows the location of the alternatives within the MCP study area, and Figures 3–5 show typical cross sections of the parkway and arterials.

Alternative 4: South of Lake Mathews/North Perris (Drain). Alternative 4 proposes a six- to eight-lane, controlled-access parkway with six mixed-flow lanes for most of its length and up to eight mixed-flow lanes near the I-215 interchange. Alternative 4 is located south of Lake Mathews and follows a northern alignment through the city of Perris. The Alternative 4 alignment is south of existing Cajalco Road west of Lake Mathews Drive and located north of Ramona Expressway from I-215 to east of Redlands Boulevard, where it then follows the Perris Valley Storm Drain to Placentia Avenue. From that point, Alternative 4 continues easterly and parallel to Ramona Expressway to the point where it connects to SR-79.

System interchanges (interchange of traffic to or from controlled access facilities, with one or more grade separations) are proposed for all of the MCP build alternatives, including Alternative 4, at MCP/I-15, MCP/I-215, and MCP/SR-79. This alternative includes a realignment of the I-215 mainline to east of the existing location, from Placentia Avenue to just north of Strata Road, approximately 5.8 kilometers (km) (3.6 mi) in length.

Service interchanges (interchange of traffic to or from a local roadway to or from a freeway) are proposed for Alternative 4 at the following locations: (1) a location approximately 2,000 meters (m) (6,560 feet [ft]) east of Temescal Canyon Road (referred to as the Estelle Mountain interchange); (2) Lake Mathews Drive; (3) El Sobrante Road; (4) Wood Road; (5) Alexander Street; (6) Clark Street; (7) Perris Boulevard; (8) Evans Road; (9) Ramona

Expressway; (10) Bernasconi Road; (11) Reservoir Road; (12) Town Center Boulevard (new arterial proposed to be added to the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element in 2008); (13) Park Center Boulevard (new arterial proposed to be added to the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element in 2008); and (14) Warren Road.

Alternative 5: South of Lake Mathews/South Perris (at Rider Street). Alternative 5 is a six- to eight-lane, controlled-access parkway with six mixed-flow lanes for most of its length and up to eight mixed-flow lanes near the I-215 interchange. Alternative 5 is south of Lake Mathews and follows a southern alignment through the city of Perris along Rider Street. The Alternative 5 alignment is south of existing Cajalco Road, west of Lake Mathews Drive, and located south of the Ramona Expressway from I-215 to just west of Antelope Road. From that point, Alternative 5 continues easterly and parallel to Ramona Expressway to the point where it connects to SR-79.

System interchanges proposed for Alternative 5 are the same as Alternative 4, with connections at MCP/I-15, MCP/I-215, and MCP/SR-79. This alternative includes a realignment of the I-215 mainline to east of the existing location, from Placentia Avenue to Ramona Expressway, that is approximately 3,300 m or 3.3 km (10,826 ft or 2.0 mi) in length.

Service interchanges for Alternative 5 are proposed at the following locations: (1) a location approximately 2,000 m (6,560 ft) east of Temescal Canyon Road (referred to as the Estelle Mountain interchange); (2) Lake Mathews Drive; (3) El Sobrante Road; (4) Wood Road; (5) Alexander Street; (6) Clark Street; (7) Perris Boulevard; (8) Evans Road; (9) Ramona Expressway; (10) Bernasconi Road; (11) Reservoir Road; (12) Town Center Boulevard (new arterial proposed to be added to the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element in 2008); (13) Park Center Boulevard (new arterial proposed to be added to the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element in 2008); and (14) Warren Road.

Alternative 6: General Plan North and South of Lake Mathews/North Perris (Drain). Alternative 6 involves the implementation of General Plan Circulation Element improvements between I-15 and El Sobrante Road and a new six- to eight-lane, controlled-access parkway east of El Sobrante Road to SR-79. Alternative 6 is the same as Alternative 4 (described above) east of El Sobrante Road and is located north of Ramona Expressway from I-215 to east of Perris Boulevard. West of El Sobrante Road to I-15, the MCP project includes a four-lane urban arterial north of Lake Mathews and a four-lane, controlled-access expressway south of Lake Mathews. The proposed arterial street improvements north and south of Lake Mathews are consistent with the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element. The facility south of Lake Mathews would be a controlled-access expressway that ties into the same system interchange configuration at I-15 as the other Build Alternatives.

System interchanges are proposed for all of the MCP build alternatives, including Alternative 6, at MCP/I-15, MCP/I-215, and MCP/SR-79.

Service interchanges for Alternative 6 are at the same locations as for Alternative 4, even though the location of the MCP alignment south of Lake Mathews is somewhat different than Alternative 4. These interchanges include: (1) Estelle Mountain; (2) Lake Mathews Drive;

(3) El Sobrante Road; (4) Wood Road; (5) Alexander Street; (6) Clark Street; (7) Perris Boulevard; (8) Evans Road; (9) Ramona Expressway; (10) Bernasconi Road; (11) Reservoir Road; (12) Town Center Boulevard (new arterial proposed to be added to the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element in 2008); (13) Park Center Boulevard (new arterial proposed to be added to the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element in 2008); and (14) Warren Road.

Alternative 7: General Plan North and South of Lake Mathews/South Perris (at Rider Street). Alternative 7 involves the implementation of General Plan Circulation Element improvements between I-15 and El Sobrante Road and a new six- to eight-lane, controlled-access parkway east of El Sobrante Road to SR-79. Alternative 7 is the same as Alternative 5 (described above) east of El Sobrante Road and follows a southerly alignment through Perris. West of El Sobrante Road to I-15, the Riverside County General Plan includes a four-lane urban arterial north of Lake Mathews and a four-lane, controlled-access expressway south of Lake Mathews. The proposed arterial street improvements north and south of Lake Mathews are consistent with the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element and are the same as described above for Alternative 6. The facility south of Lake Mathews would be a controlled-access expressway that ties into the same system interchange configuration at I-15 as the other Build Alternatives.

System interchanges are proposed for all of the MCP build alternatives, including Alternative 7, at MCP/I-15, MCP/I-215, and MCP/SR-79.

Service interchanges for Alternative 7 are at the same locations as for Alternative 5, even though the location of the MCP alignment south of Lake Mathews is somewhat different than Alternative 5. These interchanges include: (1) Estelle Mountain; (2) Lake Mathews Drive; (3) El Sobrante Road; (4) Wood Road; (5) Alexander Street; (6) Clark Street; (7) Perris Boulevard; (8) Evans Road; (9) Ramona Expressway; (10) Bernasconi Road; (11) Reservoir Road; (12) Town Center Boulevard (new arterial proposed to be added to the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element in 2008); (13) Park Center Boulevard (new arterial proposed to be added to the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element in 2008); and (14) Warren Road.

Alternative 9: Far South/Placentia Avenue. Alternative 9 is a four- to six-lane, controlled-access parkway south of both Lake Mathews and Mead Valley, a six- to eight-lane, controlled-access parkway between Old Elsinore Road and I-215, and a six- to eight-lane, controlled-access parkway between I-215 and SR-79, where it parallels existing Placentia Avenue and Ramona Expressway. Alternative 9 is approximately 3.2 km (2.0 mi) south of Cajalco Road for much of its length but shares the same connection to I-15 as Alternatives 4 and 5.

System interchanges are proposed for all the MCP build alternatives, including Alternative 9, at MCP/I-15, MCP/I-215, and MCP/SR-79. System interchanges at I-15 and SR-79 are the same as proposed for Alternatives 4, 5, 6, and 7. The proposed I-215 system interchange differs from the other MCP Build Alternatives, as it connects the MCP project to I-215 approximately 45 m (150 ft) south of Placentia Avenue. This alternative also includes a realignment of the I-215 mainline to east of the existing location, from south of Orange Avenue

to just north of Rider Street, that is approximately 3,000 m or 3.0 km (9,842 ft or 1.8 mi) in length.

Service interchanges for Alternative 9 are proposed: (1) at a location approximately 2,000 m (6,560 ft) east of Temescal Canyon Road (referenced as the Estelle Mountain interchange); (2) Lake Mathews Drive; (3) Old Elsinore Road; (4) Perris Boulevard; (5) Evans Road; (6) Ramona Expressway; (7) Bernasconi Road; (8) Reservoir Road; (9) Town Center Boulevard (new arterial proposed to be added to the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element in 2008); (10) Park Center Boulevard (new arterial proposed to be added to the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element in 2008); and (11) Warren Road.

Design Variations. The Temescal Wash Area and San Jacinto North design variations apply to all of the MCP Build Alternatives. The Rider Street and Placentia Avenue/Perris Boulevard Elevated Grade design variations only apply to Alternative 9.

Temescal Wash Area (TWS) Design Variation

This is a design variation for the MCP/I-15 interchange that partially removes access to I-15 from El Cerrito Road. In this variation, the I-15/El Cerrito Road interchange southbound on-ramp and northbound off-ramp would be closed. A collector-distributor road system is provided from Weirick Road to Cajalco Road with modifications to the existing Weirick Road, El Cerrito Road, and Ontario Avenue interchanges and the proposed Cajalco Road interchange. A collector-distributor road system would provide an intermediate road or segment that collects and feeds traffic between the MCP and local streets.

San Jacinto North (SJN) Design Variation

The SJN Design Variation extends from 1.32 km (0.82 mi) west of Warren Road east to SR-79. It follows an alignment approximately 347.4 m (1,140 ft) north of the existing Ramona Expressway. This segment also extends approximately 1.48 km (0.92 mi) north of the Ramona Expressway along SR-79 and approximately 1.06 km (0.67 mi) south of the Ramona Expressway along SR-79.

Rider Street Design Variation

The Rider Street Design Variation begins approximately 125 m (410 ft) east of Haines Street (west of I-215) and terminates about 87 m (291 ft) west of Dawson Street (east of I-215). This design variation also includes the MCP/I-215 interchange similar to Alternatives 5 and 7, with it extending along I-215 north and south of Rider Street.

Placentia Avenue/Perris Boulevard Elevated Grade Design Variation (PP-E)

The Placentia Avenue/Perris Boulevard Elevated Grade (PP-E) Design Variation follows Placentia Avenue at a point approximately 272 m (895 ft) west of Patterson Avenue (west of I-215) and extends east to 87 m (291 ft) west of Dawson Street (east of I-215). This segment includes an MCP/I-215 interchange, extending along I-215, approximately 1,570 m (5,150 ft) north and 1,870 m (6,100 ft) south of Placentia Avenue. For this design variation, the road is elevated above grade approximately 8 m (26 ft) from Barrett Avenue to Wilson Avenue.

Description of No Action Alternatives*:* Two No Project/No Action Alternatives were described in the November 2004 NOI. Alternative 1 was represented by projected 2035 traffic on the planned street network with the exception of Cajalco Road and the Ramona Expressway, which would remain as they exist today. Alternative 8 was described as full implementation of the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element street network, including the planned improvements to Cajalco Road and the Ramona Expressway. Both of these alternatives are considered No Action Alternatives for RCTC, FHWA, and Caltrans, as they reflect conditions that would occur without the MCP project. Therefore, to clarify the status of these alternatives as No Action Alternatives, they were renumbered as Alternatives 1A and 1B and titled "No Action/No Project—Existing Conditions" and "No Action/No Project—General Plan Circulation Element Conditions," respectively, and are described as follows:

- **Alternative 1A (Originally Alternative 1): No Project/No Action—Existing Conditions.** Alternative 1A is the CEQA No Project Alternative comparing the MCP project to existing conditions ("plan to ground" comparison) and 2035 traffic on the planned street network except for Cajalco Road and Ramona Expressway, which would remain as they exist today.

- **Alternative 1B (Originally Alternative 8): No Project/No Action—General Plan Circulation Element Conditions.** Alternative 1B is the NEPA No Action Alternative, including foreseeable future actions and 2035 traffic on the planned street network according to the Circulation Element of the Riverside County General Plan.

In addition, a specific 404 No Action Alternative was developed as part of the Section 404(b)(1) alternatives analysis. The 404 No Action Alternative identifies which measures are needed (e.g., bridges) to fully avoid dredge or fill within waters of the U.S. so that a Section 404 permit would not be required for the MCP project. This analysis of the 404 No Action Alternative is included in the draft 404(b)(1) alternatives analysis and is appended to the Draft EIR/EIS.

Regional Transportation Plan. An MCP build alternative would be consistent with local and regional transportation planning, as briefly summarized below:

Riverside County General Plan. A Community Environmental and Transportation Acceptability Process (CETAP) corridor has been identified in the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element since 2003. The Circulation Element defines the countywide circulation system to serve existing and adopted future land uses and ensures coordinated transportation system development among local jurisdictions. The Riverside County General Plan was updated in 2003 as part of an integrated planning effort known as the Riverside County Integrated Project (RCIP), which combined land use planning (resulting in adoption of the updated General Plan), habitat conservation planning (resulting in approval of the Western Riverside County MSHCP), and transportation planning (which resulted in the identification of four priority CETAP transportation corridors). The MCP project serves as the east-west intracounty CETAP corridor.

Regional Transportation plan (RTP) – Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). A CETAP corridor has been included in the SCAG RTP since 2000. An

RTP is developed in accordance with established federal requirements and policies. The RTP is the basic policy and program framework for long-term investment in the transportation system. The RTP process seeks to maximize mobility and accessibility, ensure safety and reliability, and improve the balance between region-wide land uses and the current and future transportation system.

If necessary, the local and regional transportation plans would be updated to reflect the selected alternative.

Other Resource Impacts and Project Costs: Table 4 summarizes the impacts of the MCP build alternatives on other important environmental resource categories and project costs.

Table 4 Other Resource Impacts and Project Costs

Alternative	Direct Impacts to Existing Habitat Reserves[1]	Section 4(f) Properties Impacted[2]	Agricultural Lands (in acres)	Cultural & Historic Resources[3]	Residential & Business Displacements[4]	Project Cost (in millions)
4	449	5	967	2	643	$3,640
5	449	5	915	2	573	$3,390
6	546	5	1,052	2	669	$3,760
7	546	5	1,001	2	599	$3,510
9	194	5	822	1	478	$3,190

1 Number of acres impacted within existing habitat reserves.

2 Number of 4(f) properties affected by permanent acquisition of property. 4(f) properties are defined by the Department of Transportation as publicly owned land of a public park, recreation areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuge, or land of an historic site of national, State, or local significance, regardless of ownership.

3 Numbers reflect the number of Native American sacred sites impacted.

4 Numbers reflect total properties to be acquired.

Additional information concerning the impacts of the proposed project is in the Draft EIR/EIS, which is available on the Internet at www.midcountyparkway.org. Table S.1 in the Executive Summary of the Draft EIR/EIS provides a comparison of the impacts that would result from each of the alternatives.

Related Regional Conservation Planning Efforts. Through the RCIP process completed in 2004, the western Riverside County MSHCP was approved. The western Riverside County MSHCP is a regional Natural Communities Conservation Plan and Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP) to enhance and maintain biological diversity and ecosystem processes while allowing for future development and economic growth. The MSHCP provides a programmatic method for mitigating the direct, indirect, and cumulative adverse effects of covered activities (General Plan land use and circulation projects, including the MCP as the west-east, intra-county

CETAP corridor) to 146 special-interest species and their associated habitats in western Riverside County. The MSHCP plan area encompasses approximately 5,090 km^2 (1,966 mi^2) and includes all unincorporated Riverside County land west of the crest of the San Jacinto Mountains to the Orange County line, as well as the jurisdictional areas of the cities of Temecula, Murrieta, Lake Elsinore, Canyon Lake, Norco, Corona, Riverside, Moreno Valley, Banning, Beaumont, Calimesa, Perris, Hemet, and San Jacinto. Ultimately, the MSHCP Reserve will contain approximately 200,000 hectares (ha) (500,000 ac) assembled from federal and state lands, local public lands, and private sector lands.

The MSHCP Reserve will be assembled through a combination of the following methods:

- Conservation of existing public lands
- Local acquisition of private lands
- Federal and state acquisition of private lands
- Private and public development contributions
- Regional infrastructure

The MSHCP's strategy for assembly of the additional 61,900 ha (153,000 ac) needed to create the envisioned 200,000 ha (500,000 ac) MSHCP Reserve takes a balanced approach. It allocates responsibility for assembling the MSHCP Reserve equitably among the County of Riverside, the 14 cities in western Riverside County, RCTC, Caltrans, and other private and public entities engaged in construction activities that impact covered species. The implementation strategy relies heavily on incentives to encourage private property owners to conserve lands through the land use entitlement process. Where incentives are not sufficient, conservation will require the purchase of properties from willing sellers.

Over 8,000 ha (20,000 ac) of privately owned land is within MSHCP criteria area within the MCP study area. All or portions of this criteria area may be acquired through purchase or other means for the MSHCP Reserve. The analysis of cumulative effects of the MCP project considers the ability of the MCP project to induce and/or redirect growth in the study area compared to the current adopted General Plan recommendations for the study area, with consideration given to the anticipated commitment to significant areas of natural open space for the purpose of habitat conservation.

The San Jacinto River Watershed Special Area Management Plan (SAMP) process is being carried out jointly as a SAMP/Master Streambed Alteration Agreement (MSAA), with the Corps and California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) as the lead agencies under NEPA and CEQA, respectively. The purpose of the SAMP is to develop and implement a watershed-wide aquatic resource management plan and implementation program, which could include preservation, enhancement, and restoration of aquatic resources, while allowing reasonable and responsible economic development within the study area. The SAMP is being closely coordinated with the Regional Conservation Authority, the County of Riverside, RWQCB, USFWS, and EPA. A draft joint EIR/EIS for the proposed SAMP/MSAA will eventually be circulated for public review and comment. The process is anticipated to result a streamlined

Section 404 permitting process, including an Aquatic Resources Conservation Program, among other documents and products.

Proposed Mitigation. No specific compensatory mitigation sites are proposed by the applicant at this time. However, the applicant intends to provide compensatory mitigation to offset the unavoidable impacts of the proposed project on WofUS, including wetlands, with the goal of no net loss of wetlands functional values (e.g., habitat, hydrology, and water quality integrity). A general approach with performance standards has been established (see Appendix Q, Conceptual Mitigation Plan of the Draft EIR/EIS), with additional implementation level details of the compensatory mitigation strategy to be developed once a preferred alternative has been selected. Mitigation will be applied to both temporarily and permanently impacted WofUS.

An important consideration in the development, implementation, and long-range success of the aquatic resources mitigation is appropriate site selection to ensure that created, restored, and/or enhanced wetlands and riparian ecosystems are self-sustaining and capable of functioning in perpetuity. To accomplish this, performance standards, site maintenance, and monitoring criteria must be established and properly implemented. In general, the mitigation sites shall possess or have the potential for appropriate habitat connectivity, maintain sufficient hydrology, and exhibit suitable soils that will adequately support wetland species. A complete listing of mitigation measures for impacts to all environmental topics is provided in Chapter 3 and Appendix F (Environmental Commitments Record) of the Draft EIR/EIS.

Proposed Special Conditions

No special conditions are proposed at this time.

Subsequent Public Notice

The aforementioned MOU (re: NEPA, Section 404 of the CWA) sets forth procedures for an integrated process to ensure that both the procedural aspects of the NEPA are met and the substantive requirements of the CWA are fulfilled. Accordingly, the MOU provides for multiple checkpoints during the environmental evaluation process to obtain concurrence from the Corps, EPA, and the USFWS (and NOAA Fisheries if anadromous fish are affected) as a prerequisite for moving forward to the next step. Since the FHWA has not identified a federally preferred alternative, this PN summarizes the range of alternatives that are being considered in the Draft EIR/EIS, but is unable to disclose the final proposed activity for which a Corps 404 permit decision will be rendered. Consequently, this PN will be followed by a second PN commensurate with the circulation of the Final EIR/EIS. The subsequent PN will solicit public comments on the federally preferred alternative/preliminary LEDPA that is selected through the NEPA-404 MOU process and in accordance with 40 CFR 1502.l4(e). Public comments received on the subsequent PN will be used by the Corps to determine the need for an additional public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

For additional information please contact Susan A. Meyer of my staff at (808) 438-2137. This public notice is issued by the Chief, Regulatory Division.

Citations

Environmental Laboratory. 1987. “Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual,” Technical Report Y-87-1. U.S. Army Engineer Waterways Experiment Station, Vicksburg, MS.

Smith, R. D. 2008. Potential Impacts of Alternative Corridor Alignments to Waters of the United States, Riparian Ecosystems, and Threatened and Endangered Species: Mid County Parkway Project, Riverside County, California. U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center, Waterways Experiment Station, Vicksburg, MS.

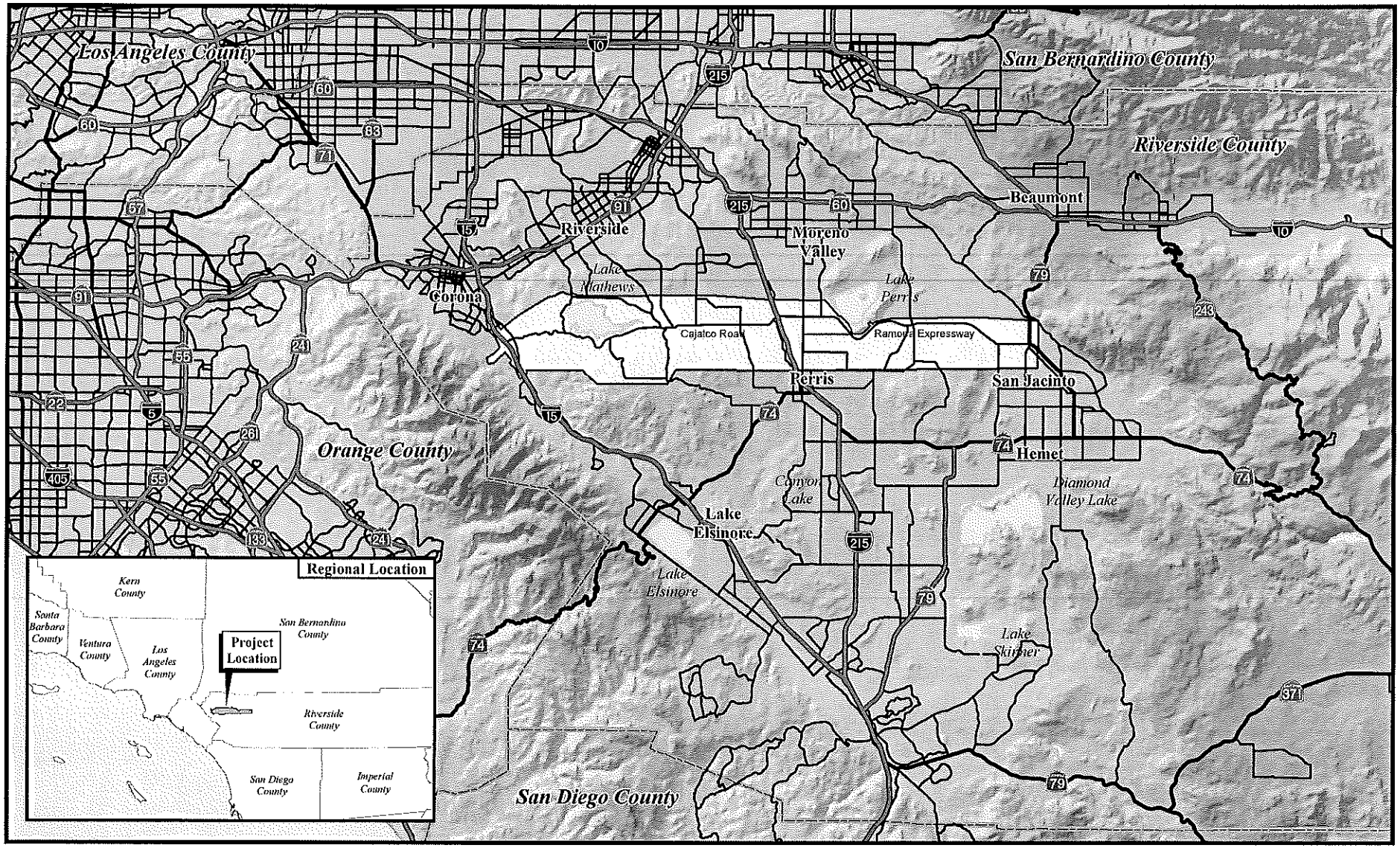

Figure 1

Legend

Mid County Parkway Study Area

SOURCE: ESRI (2006); TBM (2006), Jacobs Engineering (2/07)

0 2.5 5 10 Miles

0 4 8 16 Kilometers

Regional Location

KP 0.0/51.0 (PM 0.0/31.7) EA 08-0F3200

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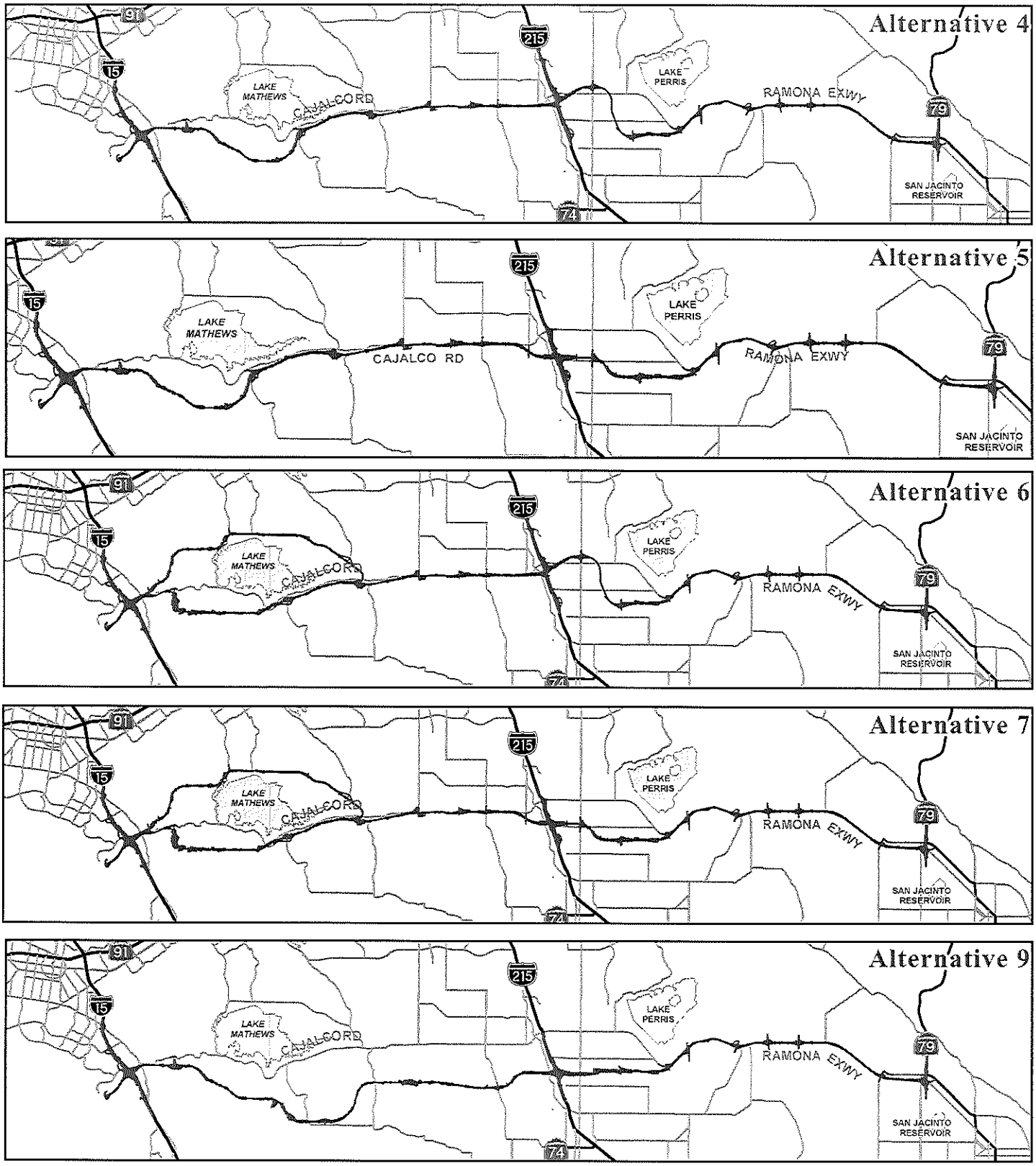

FIGURE 2

SOURCE: TBM (2006), Jacobs Engineering (02/2007).

0 2.02 4.03 8.05 Kilometers

0 1.25 2.5 5 Miles

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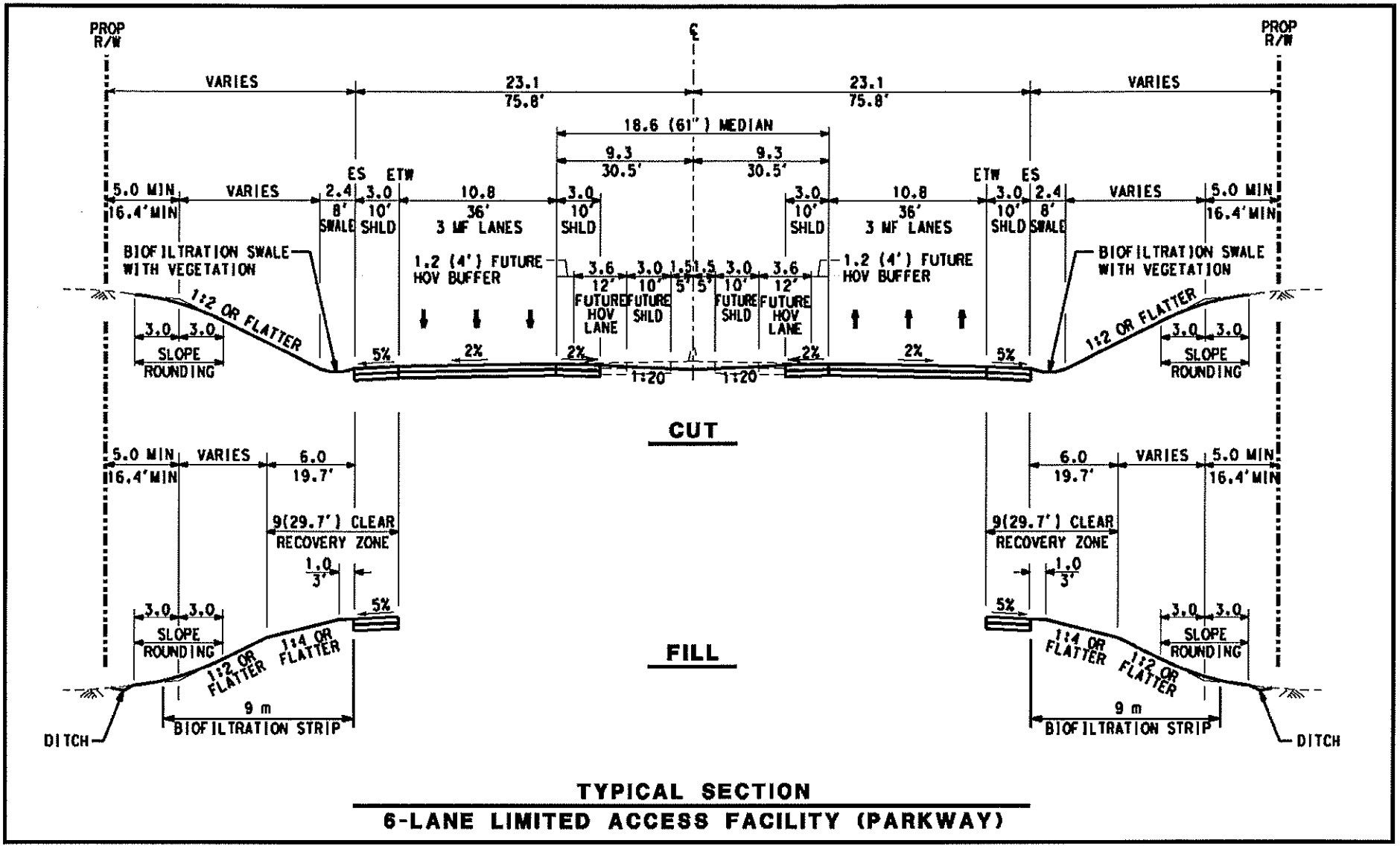
Alternatives 4,5,6,7 and 9

KP 0.0/51.0 (PM 0.0/31.7) EA 08-0F3200

MID COUNTY PARKWAY
CETAP
SAN JACINTO - CORONA



TYPICAL SECTION

6-LANE LIMITED ACCESS FACILITY (PARKWAY)

Figure 3

METERS / FEET Dimension

Right-of-Way

SOURCE: Jacobs Engineering (2007)

Typical Cross Sections: General Plan Roadways in Alternatives 6 and 7

KP 0.0/51.0 (PM 0.0/31.7) EA 08-0F3200

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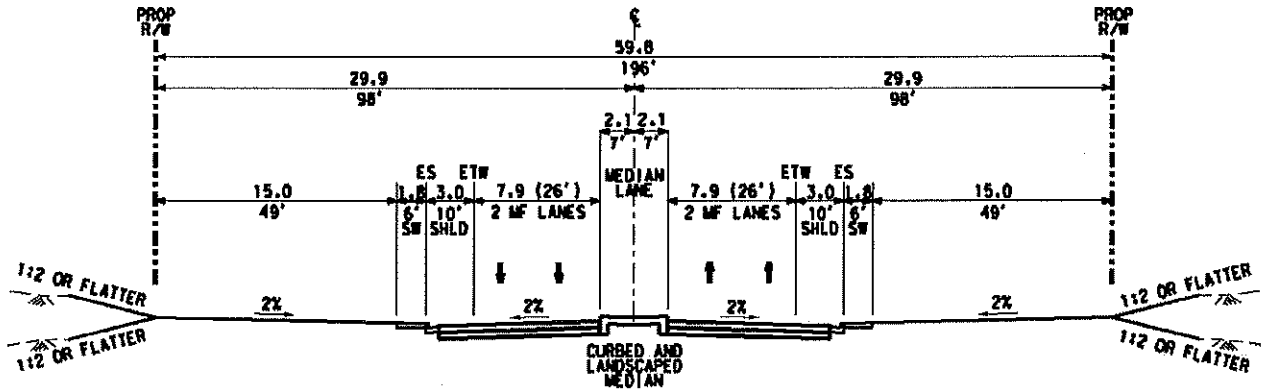
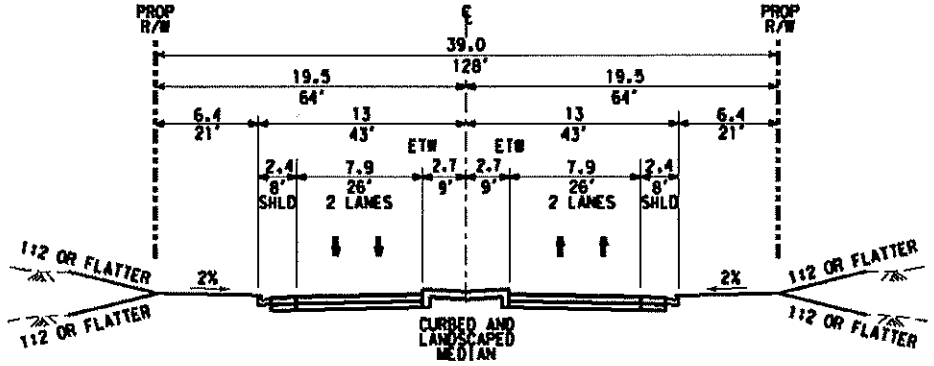


TYPICAL SECTION
4-LANE EXPRESSWAY

FROM CAJALCO ROAD TO EL SOBRANTE ROAD/CAJALCO ROAD JOIN POINT



TYPICAL SECTION
4-LANE ARTERIAL

FROM I-15 TO EL SOBRANTE ROAD

Figure 4

METERS / FEET Dimension

Right-of-Way

SOURCE: Jacobs Engineering (2007)

Typical Cross Sections:General Plan

KP 0.0/51.0 (PM 0.0/31.7) EA 08-0F3200

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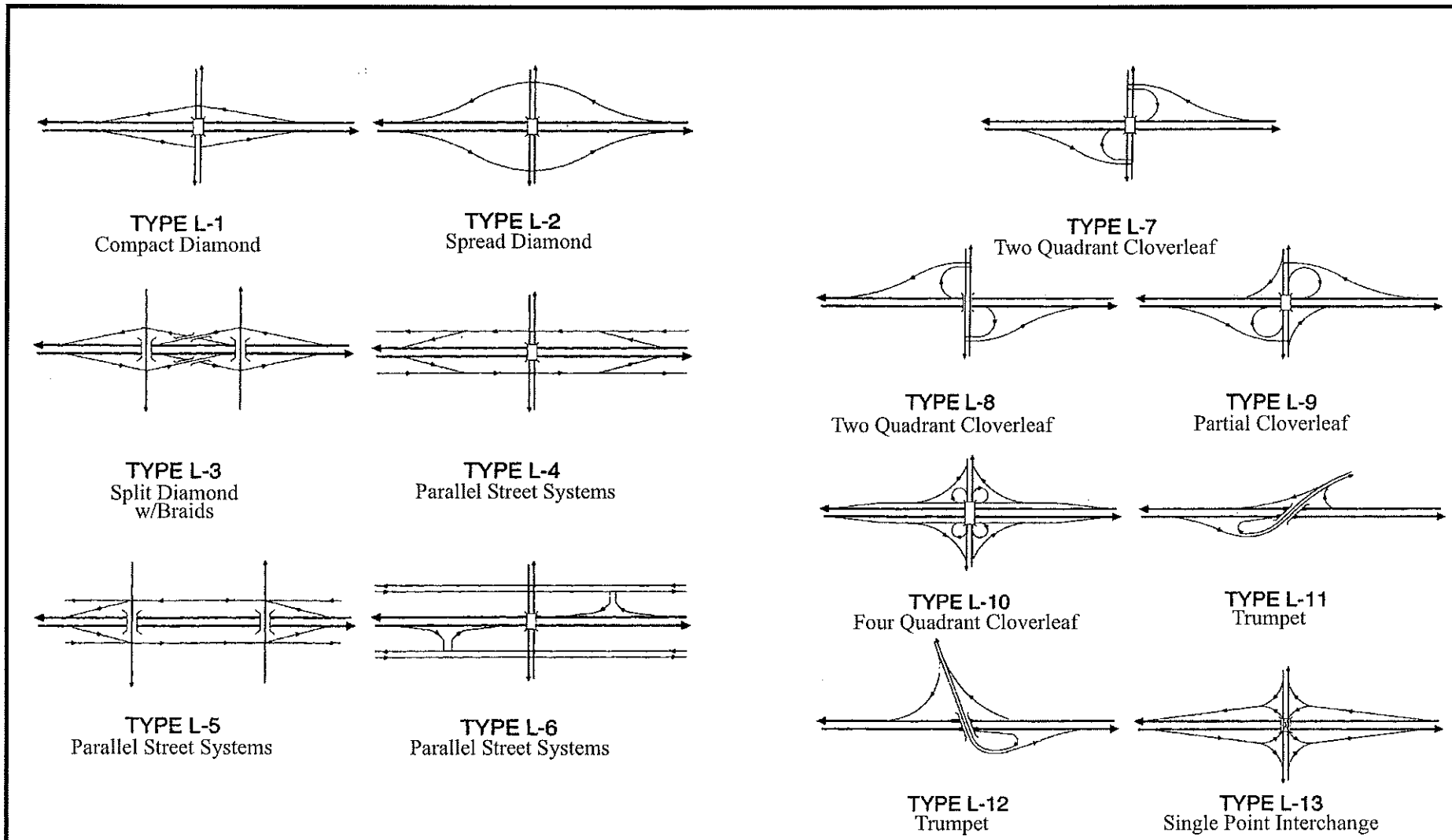

Figure 5

NO SCALE

SOURCE: Caltrans Highway Design Manual (November, 2001)

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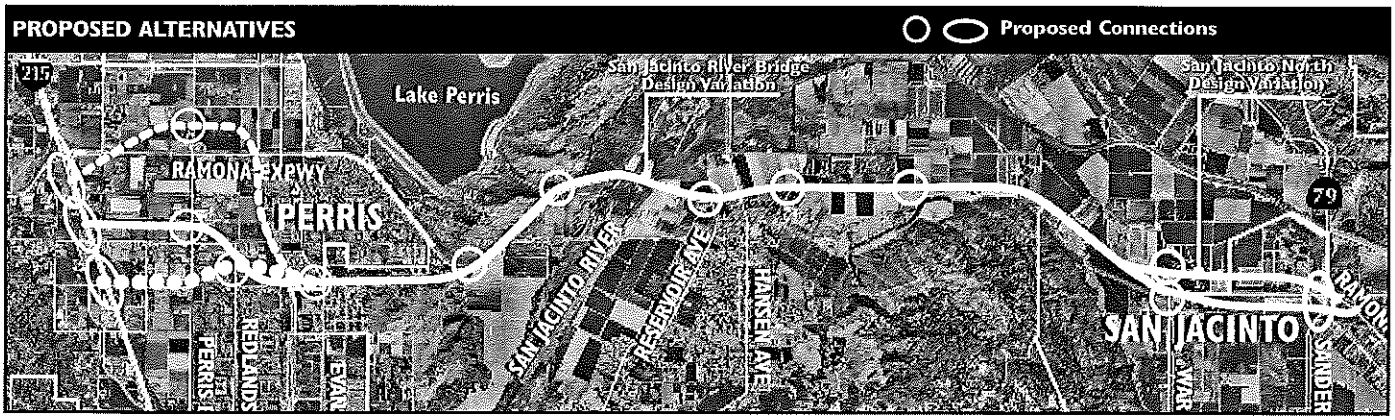
Typical Local Street Interchanges

KP0.0/51.0 (PM 0.0/31.7) EA 08-0F3200

MID COUNTY PARKWAY PROJECT
PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice of Availability of Recirculated Sections of the Recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Report



WHAT IS BEING PLANNED?

The Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) are proposing a project to improve west-east transportation in western Riverside County between Interstate 215 in the west and State Route 79 in the east. RCTC is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and FHWA is the Lead Agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), in cooperation with Caltrans. The Mid County Parkway (MCP) project is a proposed 16-mile transportation corridor designed to relieve local and regional traffic congestion between the cities of Perris and San Jacinto and surrounding Riverside County communities. This corridor was identified as part of the Riverside County Integrated Project, a region-wide planning effort to ensure mobility and protect the environment and quality of life as the area continues to grow. The project alternatives consist of three Build Alternatives (Alternatives 4 Modified, 5 Modified, and 9 Modified) and two No Build Alternatives (1A and 1B).

WHY THIS NOTICE?

In January 2013, RCTC, Caltrans, and FHWA circulated a Recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR)/Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) which examined the potential environmental impacts of alternatives being considered for the MCP project.

RCTC, as the Lead Agency under CEQA, has prepared additional quantitative analyses of potential air quality and greenhouse gas emissions and climate change effects of the MCP Build Alternatives and has revised four parts of Chapter 4.0, California Environmental Quality Act Evaluation (Sections 4.4.III, Air Quality; 4.4.VII, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, 4.5, Climate Change; and Table 4.10; Summary of Effects) from the EIR to incorporate those additional analyses. Because only certain sections of the Recirculated Draft EIR that have been revised and replaced are being circulated, reviewers should limit their comments to these revised sections of the Recirculated Draft EIR only, consistent with Section 15088(f)(2) of the CEQA Guidelines. Furthermore, previous comment letters submitted on the Recirculated Draft EIR/Supplemental Draft EIS during the prior public review period on non-recirculated chapters need not be resubmitted.

WHAT IS AVAILABLE?

Revised Sections 4.4.III, 4.4.VII, 4.5, and Table 4.10 in Chapter 4.0 of the Recirculated Draft EIR are available for viewing at the following locations during regular business hours:

RCTC, 4080 Lemon Street 3rd Floor, Riverside, CA 92501
FHWA, 650 Capitol Mall, Suite 4-100, Sacramento, CA 95814
Caltrans District 8 Office, 464 W. 4th Street, San Bernardino, CA 92401
Perris Public Library, 163 E. San Jacinto Avenue, Perris, CA 92507
San Jacinto Public Library, 500 Idyllwild Drive, San Jacinto, CA 92583
Moreno Valley Public Library, 25480 Alessandro Boulevard, Moreno Valley, CA 92553

You may also view and comment on revised Sections 4.4.III, 4.4.VII, and 4.5, and Table 4.10 at www.midcountyparkway.org.

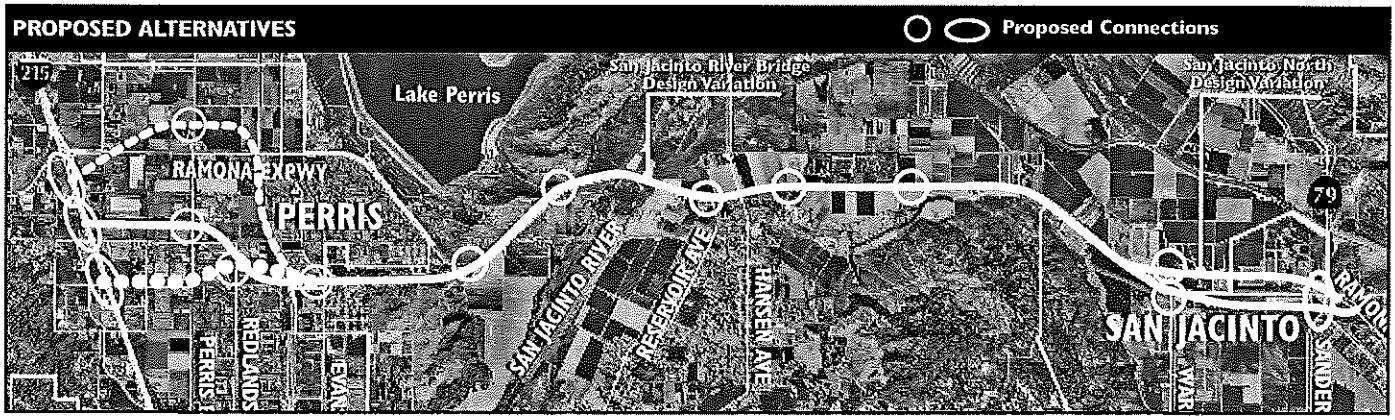
WHERE YOU COME IN

Revised Sections 4.4.III, 4.4.VII, and 4.5 and Table 4.10 are available for public review and comment between January 31, 2014 and March 17, 2014. The purpose of the public review and comment period is to give interested parties the opportunity to provide their input on the additional analyses conducted by RCTC as the CEQA Lead Agency. Comments received during the public review period for these revised Sections of the Recirculated Draft EIR will be formally responded to in the Final EIR/EIS. Comments on revised Sections 4.4.III, 4.4.VII, and 4.5, and Table 4.10 may be submitted online at www.midcountyparkway.org, or in writing and mailed to: Mr. Alex Menor, RCTC, P.O. Box 12008, Riverside, CA 92502. All comments must be received no later than 5 PM on March 17, 2014.

PROYECTO 'MID COUNTY PARKWAY'

AVISO PÚBLICO

Aviso de disponibilidad de las secciones del proyecto de Recirculación de Informe de Impacto Ambiental Recirculado



¿QUÉ SE ESTÁ PLANEANDO?

La Comisión de Transporte del Condado de Riverside (RCTC), la Administración Federal de Carreteras (FHWA) y el Departamento de Transporte de California (Caltrans) están proponiendo un proyecto para mejorar el transporte de oeste al este, en el oeste del Condado de Riverside entre La Interestatal 215 en el oeste y la Ruta Estatal 79 en el este. RCTC es el organismo principal de la Ley de Calidad Ambiental de California (CEQA) y la FHWA es la agencia líder bajo la Ley Nacional de Poliza Ambiental (NEPA), en cooperación con el proyecto Caltrans. El 'Mid County Parkway' (MCP) es un proyecto de un corredor de transporte de 16 millas diseñado para aliviar la congestión del tráfico local y regional entre las ciudades de Perris y San Jacinto. Tambien incluye los corredores alrededores de las comunidades del Condado de Riverside. Este fue identificado como parte de el Proyecto Integrado del Condado de Riverside, un esfuerzo de planificación a nivel regional para garantizar la movilidad y la protección del medio ambiente y la calidad de vida de la zona, la cual sigue en crecimiento. Las alternativas del proyecto se componen de tres Alternativas de Construcción (Alternativas, 4 Modificados, 5 Modificados y 9 Modificados) y dos alternativas que No requieren construir (1A y 1B).

¿POR QUÉ ESTE AVISO?

En enero de 2013, RCTC, Caltrans y FHWA recircularon un Informe del Proyecto de Impacto Ambiental (EIR) / Proyecto de Declaración Suplementaria de Impacto Ambiental (EIS), que examinó los potenciales impactos ambientales de las alternativas que se están considerando para el proyecto MCP. RCTC, como organismo principal bajo CEQA, ha preparado un análisis adicional y cuantitativo de las potenciales emisiones de calidad del aire y de gases de efecto invernadero que causan los efectos del cambio climático de Alternativas de Construcción de MCP y ha revisado cuatro partes del capítulo 4.0, Ley de California de Evaluación de la Calidad Ambiental (Secciones 4.4.III, la calidad del aire; 4.4.VII, Emisiones de Gases de Efecto Invernadero, 4.5, Cambio Climático, y la Tabla 4.10, Resumen de los efectos) de la EIR para incorporar estos análisis adicionales. Debido a que sólo ciertas secciones del Proyecto EIR han sido recirculadas, revisadas y reemplazadas, los revisores deben limitar sus comentarios solamente a estas secciones revisadas del Proyecto de Recirculado EIR, de conformidad con la Sección 15.088(f)(2) de las directrices de CEQA. Además, las cartas de comentarios anteriores presentados en el Proyecto de Recirculado EIR/EIS Proyecto Suplementario durante el perîodo de revisión pùblica antes de capítulos no recirculados no necesitan volver a presentarse.

¿QUÉ ESTÁ DISPONIBLE?

Secciones revisadas 4.4.III, 4.4.VII, 4.5, y en la Tabla 4.10 en el capítulo 4.0 del Proyecto Recirculado EIR están disponibles para su consulta en los siguientes lugares y durante las horas regulares:

RCTC, 4080 Lemon Street 3rd Floor, Riverside, CA 92501
FHWA, 650 Capitol Mall, Suite 4-100, Sacramento, CA 95814
Caltrans District 8 Office, 464 W. 4th Street, San Bernardino, CA 92401
Perris Public Library, 163 E. San Jacinto Avenue, Perris, CA 92507
San Jacinto Public Library, 500 Idyllwild Drive, San Jacinto, CA 92583
Moreno Valley Public Library, 25480 Alessandro Boulevard, Moreno Valley, CA 92553

También puede ver y comentar sobre los articulos revisados 4.4.III, 4.4.VII y 4.5, y en la Tabla 4.10 en www.midcountyparkway.org.

EN QUE MOMENTO USTED PARTICIPA

Secciones revisadas 4.4.III, 4.4.VII, y 4.5 y la Tabla 4.10 se encuentran disponibles para su revisión y comentarios del pùblico entre el 31 de enero de 2014 y 17 de marzo de 2014. El propósito de la revision publica y periodo de comentarios es dar a las partes interesadas la oportunidad de proporcionar sus comentarios sobre los análisis adicionales realizados por RCTC como organismo principal CEQA. Los comentarios recibidos durante el perîodo de revisión pùblica para estas secciones revisadas del Proyecto de Recirculado EIR será respondido formalmente en EIR/EIS Final. Los comentarios sobre las secciones revisadas 4.4.III, 4.4.VII y 4.5, y en la Tabla 4.10 pueden presentarse en linea en www.midcountyparkway.org, o por escrito y enviarse por correo a: Sr. Alex Menor, RCTC, P.O. Box 12008, Riverside, CA 92502. Todos los comentarios deben ser recibidos no más tarde de las 5pm del 17 de marzo de 2014.

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